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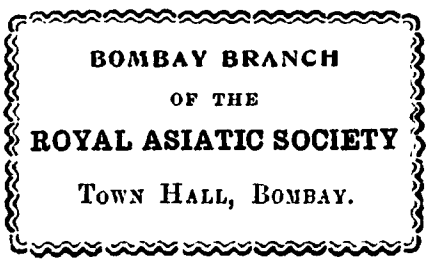


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# FOUNDATIONS OF MODERN EUROPE

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# MODERN EUROPE

## TWELVE LECTURES

DELIVERED IN THE UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

BY

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(DOCTOR JURIS)

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# PREFACE

THE present work attempts to give a short sketch of the main facts and tendencies of European history that, from the year 1756 onwards, have contributed to the making of the present state of politics and civilization. It has grown out of a series of public lectures which the author delivered at the request of the University of London in the central hall of the said University, in South Kensington, London, during the Lent term of 1903. The author is fully aware of the massiveness and apparent unwieldiness of the innumerable details known about the period, which, it would appear, it is almost an insolence to attempt describing in a small book of a couple of hundred pages. Yet it may be urged that in history, as well as in nature, the greater the extent of movements and phenomena in general, the more readily must they yield to certain general formulation. There has been no Kepler's law for the movements of tiny leaves falling in autumn; but we have long known the laws regulating the movements of the planets. The events of history from 1756 to 1815 are so vast and so plastic, that on that very account they can more easily be treated and summarized than could, for instance, the incoherent and meaningless facts of the history of some negro state in Africa.

Throughout the lectures (and the present work) the main object was to indicate not only the body of the general facts, but more particularly their soul, their meaning. In that, very probably, the author has frequently been mistaken; just as he cannot help stating, that other writers on the same period have not always been successful in reading aright the drift or the causes of modern history. The author craves permission to assure the reader that he has not only carefully read a considerable number of the original "sources" bearing on the period from 1756 to 1871, but also that he has tried to acquire an intimate and personal acquaintance with the nations whose modern history he has endeavoured to trace. An acquaintance ever so intimate with the life and language of each of the leading modern nations is, by itself, no guarantee for a correct insight into their history and civilization. Yet, on the other hand, we cannot but state in rather uncompromising terms, that no amount of patient research in archives or books can ever be held to replace that living knowledge of nations which a lengthy sojourn in the different countries, rendered more instructive by the fight for life in those countries, can alone convey. To write the history of a country not only neatly or eruditely, but well, one must love that country, one must have much suffered and much enjoyed in that country. History ought indeed to be written *quellengerecht* (from and in keeping with the sources), as the Germans call it; however, it is usually overlooked that the most abundant as well as safest historical "source" is to be found in that very personal acquaintance with five to six essentially different types of modern national civilization, which it is somewhat

difficult to acquire in the silent vaults of archives alone.

The author takes this opportunity to thank the numerous ladies and gentlemen who have honoured him with their attendance, for their patience and kindness. A Hungarian is, as a rule, sure of sympathy in Great Britain; yet the spirit of absolute fairness with which the audience received many an opinion running counter to some of the best cherished national views of history, was very much more than could be expected in many another country. May the readers of this book extend the same fairness to views prompted neither by malice, nor, it is hoped, by inexcusable ignorance.

The author begs to thank the University Extension Board of the University of London for the honour they have conferred upon him by intrusting him with this and other systematic courses on history, and the historic study of Evidence in Science and the Humanities.

EMIL REICH.

LONDON,
33, ST. LUKE'S ROAD, W.
*January 14th*, 1904.

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ERRATUM.

P. 215, line 21, *for* French *read* Germans.

# FOUNDATIONS OF MODERN EUROPE, 1760-1871

## I

### THE WAR OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE, 1763-1783

THE history of that great war suffers from a peculiar combination of circumstances, all making for oblivion or neglect of the true causes and real trend of its momentous events. The Americans themselves, with few exceptions, have related it in the manner in which, from the Hellenes downwards, all great nations have arranged rather than stated the beginnings of their ultimate grandeur. The vanity of nations, growing apace with their real greatness, nay, constantly outmarching it, has done, in this case, what it never fails to do in cases of even much smaller dimensions: vanity has been fighting its clever and deceptive rearguard-fights, in order to hide or let escape the really important corps of combatants. In the States the name of Lafayette is seen and heard in each town, in each county, in each state. Innumerable streets, very numerous towns and institutions, parks, etc., are named after the young French Marquis, who, in reality, per-

formed none of the decisive or important acts or measures leading to the independence of the thirteen colonies. Of Vergennes or Beaumarchais, on the other hand, few, if any, Americans have ever heard a word of praise or appreciation. Even Captain Mahan (*Influence of Sea-Power*, 1660-1783, p. 345), speaks of "a Frenchman named Beaumarchais." As a matter of fact, the influence of Beaumarchais was incomparably, one may boldly say, immeasurably, greater than that of Lafayette. The vast admiration bestowed upon the French aristocrat has undoubtedly been suggested to save thereby the *amour propre* of the Americans. Flattery to Lafayette does not imply the serious reduction of American merit which recognition of Beaumarchais would unmistakably entail.

As with Lafayette, so with the decisive military movements of the war. The Americans who, single-handed, won only one important success, the surrender of the British army at Saratoga, have naturally enough no strong interest whatever to dwell on the decisive and clinching naval manœuvres of the summer of 1781, which were conducted solely by the French. As in the case of the contemporary Italians, who won their unity at the hands of the same nation that drove the English from the American colonies, the new nation feels only a cold gratitude towards its saviour friend, and would wax very indignant were it to be told that it was, one in the period from 1775 to 1783, the other from 1859 to 1866, the godfather rather than the father of its own liberty and independence. In saying that, we mean no irony whatever. As gratitude appears to be a native quality of some animals rather than of man, and would, moreover, ill suit the *status naturalis* in

which nations have always stood to one another; so, on the other hand, extremely few nations have been honoured by the gods with the gift and opportunity of Marathon, Salamis or Plataea.

As to English narrators of the great war, it is needless to prove that they have never been over-eager to admit, that in 1781 they met, at the hands of the French, with a Waterloo far more destructive of British interests than was the last battle of Napoleon to the interests of France. Moreover, the documents in the Record Office in London are, as a rule, not fully accessible after the date of October 20th, 1760.

Finally, the French, the real victors in that great struggle, have never cared to go into the details of an "*affaire*," all the actors and events of which were soon obscured and overshadowed by the gigantic tragedy of the French Revolution. It is only some thirteen years ago, that the French have, in H. Doniol's *Histoire de la participation de la France à l'établissement des Etats-Unis*, received many of the official documents bearing on the interference of France in America; and to be quite correct, Doniol's great work was terminated only a short time ago. As to the then allies of the French, the Spanish and the Dutch, their important interference has as yet not been written up in a satisfactory historical work.

These are the peculiar circumstances rendering a fair view of all the factors in the War of American Independence a matter of great difficulty. On the other hand, the historian must necessarily look for consolation to the just remark, that the larger, the more comprehensive the waves of historical events, the smaller is the number of their controlling causes.

The study of the history of science cannot but confirm us in the belief, that vast movements are caused not by a concourse of an infinite number of small causes, but a restricted number of large causes. Newton's triumph in proving the correctness of the simple assumption of gravitation, suggested or implied by Kepler, Bullialdus and others, as a satisfactory explanation of the vast motions in our planetary system, is both the best illustration and the strongest proof of the doctrine of diminishing number of causes in increasingly vast movements.

It will accordingly not be impossible to discover, in the immense maze of persons, events and measures filling the canvas of time from 1775 to 1783, a few of the controlling causes shaping events, directing its currents and covering its undercurrents.

The War of American Independence is held to be, more particularly with the English-speaking nations, a matter pre-eminently of English or American history.

It is in reality and *par excellence* a European, an international event. It happened in a period when for almost exactly two hundred years, all the great wars were European wars. From 1618 to 1815 Europe was ravaged, with few important exceptions, by international, or inter-European wars only. In strong contrast to this broad fact we note, that Europe has, since 1815, carefully avoided such international wars, and always succeeded in localizing combats that threatened to set ablaze the whole of Europe, such as the Crimean war, or the Franco-German war. This desistance from international wars has, it may be advanced, little or nothing to do with the progress of

ethical ideals, the realization of which has not yet left the precincts of pious hopes. It is due to the fact that since 1815 each of the Great Powers of Europe has long secured its territorial self-contentedness. Previous to 1815 each of the continental states consisted of a great, occasionally bewildering, number of "enclaves" straggling over various latitudes; so that Prussia, or Austria, or Bavaria had no territorial unity whatever. The direct consequence was, that each of these states, having vulnerable points in all possible directions, was deeply interested in the policy of all the neighbouring nations which, eventually, might encroach upon or further its own territorial hopes. After 1815 the number of "enclaves" was more and more reduced, so that Germany, France, Austria, Italy, etc., have long since ceased to lack territorial unity. Unless, therefore, one of these countries is attacked directly, it has no serious interest in meddling with the affairs of the other nations.

In the eighteenth century the case was quite different. The war of the Spanish Succession, 1701-1713; the war of the Austrian Succession, 1740-1748; the great war ("Seven Years' War") of Frederick the Great, 1756-1763; the wars of the French Revolution, 1792-1815: all of them were international wars proper. In all of them substantial, *i.e.* territorial, interests of all the Great Powers of Europe were engaged, and all of them were settled by international treaties of peace, such as the peace of Utrecht and Rastadt, 1713 and 1714; the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, 1748; the treaties of Hubertusburg and Paris, 1763; and the treaties of Basle, 1795, Campo Formio, 1797, Lunéville, 1801, Amiens, 1802, Pressburg, 1805, Tilsit, 1807, Vienna

(or Schönbrunn), 1809, and the Congress of Vienna, 1814-1815.

The American War of Independence is one of those international, or inter-European events of the eighteenth century, terminated by the (second) treaty of Paris, 1783. As in the case of Italy, in the second half of the nineteenth century, France and Prussia and England had strong political interests to promote the unity of Italy, so it was in the sixties and seventies of the eighteenth century a vital interest of some of the Great Powers of Europe outside England to wrest the American colonies from the British. This is the essence of the whole struggle extending over eight years, and fought in all the seas of the four continents.

But while this inter-European interest is undoubtedly the chief motor and cause of the ultimate success of the colonists in America, we must, on careful investigation of the facts, take into consideration the interests of those colonists themselves. Much as France, Spain and Holland desired to weaken and humiliate England, their combined efforts would have proved inefficient, had the colonists not been induced to persevere in the attempt at severance from the mother-country in the teeth of all the misery and despair that a struggle with mighty England could not but entail. In order, therefore, to seize adequately the home or American cause of the Revolt and its ultimate success, we must, before going into the details of inter-European policy, study the *vera causa* of that powerful discontent that urged the colonists first into adverse reflections, then into threatening petitions, riotous acts, half disloyal conventions and congresses,

overt acts of rebellion, and finally into open war against England.

The current view of the causes of discontent is centered on the indignation of the colonists at the various measures of unconstitutional, or, at any rate, unwise taxation of the American colonies proposed, in turn, by Grenville, Townshend, North, and, chief of all, by George III. The Stamp Act of 1765, the taxes on various commodities in 1770, 1772, and 1774—these and similar measures, although in no way financially oppressive to the colonists (the taxes never yielded more, or could yield more, than a paltry sum) are said to have, in addition to single and isolated acts of high-handed autocracy, so exasperated the fine moral or legal fibre of the colonists as to drive them into rebellion. This explanation has the advantage of being pleasing both to the British and the Americans. The British, with a smile of parental pride enjoy the spectacle of their own kin rushing into revolt for ideal motives of Right and Law that animated the breasts, it is held, of the barons on the fields of Runnymede in King John's time (1215), or in the clouded age of the Oxford Provisions (1258), let alone in the classic period of the "Nineteen Propositions" (June, 1642), or the "Bill of Rights" (1688). Or, as Tennyson says:

> "O thou, that sendest out the man
> To rule by land and sea,
> Strong mother of a Lion-line,
> Be proud of those strong sons of thine
> Who wrenched their rights from thee!"

The Americans again, with a distinctly British passion for ethical beating of the breast, delight and thus

believe in the deep moral indignation of the men and women of the colonies as the main cause of the deep-seated discontent that broke out in the grave events of 1775.

Without in the least trying to minimize the value and theoretical beauty of moral indignation, it may be intimated that such ethical shivers do not, as a rule, prove of long duration, unless supported by abiding considerations of material profit. Ideal motives are no doubt at work, stealthily or openly, in all the greater historic achievements of white humanity; but from their very intensity it must be inferred that their power of extension in time and space is always somewhat limited. The profound wisdom of the Christian Religion has manifested itself in few things to a greater advantage than in the firm, if not original establishment of one ideal day in seven, this being about the true ratio of the force of ideal motives to motives savouring more of terrestrial and mundane sources. In historical investigations, at any rate, it will be wiser, if not nobler, to search, in any long and wearisome struggle, for causes less ethereal and more compact and concrete.

Nor is it a matter of inordinate difficulty to point out that compact and concrete cause which, in all human probability, did infinitely more in stiffening the hearts and minds of the colonials, than could ever be done by the abstract reasonings on constitutional questions by Otis and Richard Bland, or by the moral uprising of the Puritans of New England. History, in Europe, and still more outside Europe, is written largely, if not wholly, in characters of that geography, or, as we prefer to call it, geo-politics, that has, as the

true bass of the harmonic and enharmonic melodies of history determined the trend and tenor of decisive events. Undoubtedly history is not a mere game of chess, in which man figures only as an insignificant pawn. Yet, with all due recognition of the influence of men, and especially of historic personalities, we cannot but arrive at the conclusion that man is inclined, precipitated, or retarded, by that Great Constant, the Earth and its physiographic configuration. To use the language of the scientist: in history man represents the *ordinatae*, Earth the *abscissae*. It is evident that for a true construction of the curve of events, we must have the *abscissae* first, and then the *ordinatae*.

There can be little doubt that the abiding, material, and yet, prospectively at least, also ideal cause of the deepseated antagonism of the colonials to the British Government was caused by the fatally wrong policy of the Court of St. James's with regard to the vast *Hinterland* of the colonies. It was for the possession of that vast *Hinterland*, by treaty-rights stretching from the Alleghany Mountains to the Mississippi—practically, however, to the Pacific—that the colonials had cheerfully joined in the British war against the French from 1755 to 1762. It was already then well-known, from the writings of French Jesuits and other explorers, that the colonies were surrounded, or rather supplemented by the most fertile and at the same time the vastest *Hinterland* in history. Neither Central nor South America; neither modern Egypt, nor South Africa, let alone Canada or Australia, are endowed with a *Hinterland* at once so vast and so easily accessible or amenable to purposes of cultivation. In that *Hinterland*, fully described in the works of

Jonathan Carver, Robert Rogers, James Adair, William Smith, and of other colonials long before the battle of Lexington, the colonials were conscious of having the possibility and the guarantee of indefinite progress and unlimited prosperity. As modern Russia, instead of wasting untold treasures of men and money in barren wars with Prussia or Austria, has consistently preferred to occupy and utilize its immense *Hinterland* from the Ural to Manchuria, even so the colonials in British America consciously or subconsciously felt that their real and great destiny was in their *Hinterland*, and not in their connection with Great Britain. So clear was this, the all-decisive factor to most thinking men of that time, that men as different in every other respect as were Montcalm, French commander of Canada; Turgot, philosopher and economist; and Vergennes, French ambassador at Constantinople,—all predicted the secession of the colonials as soon as the French were driven out from the Ohio valley and the Lakes district—that is, as soon as the question of the *Hinterland* was made a problem of actual politics.

King George III. had, however, no sooner concluded peace with the French in 1763, than he issued, on October 7th, 1763, a proclamation, in which the king's "loving subjects" in the colonies were forbidden to make purchases of land from the Indians, or to farm any settlement west of the Alleghany mountains. Nor did this proclamation remain a dead letter. As late as 1772 a colonial's petition for settlement on the Ohio River was categorically refused by the Lord Commissioners for Trade; Lord Hillsborough holding that the proclamation of 1763 was too explicit to be

interpreted in any other sense. This proclamation did not, of course, prevent numberless colonials from making repeated attempts at the occupation of the forbidden *Hinterland*. There are still numerous legal and administrative documents in the Record Office in London, referring to the incessant encroachment of the colonials upon the territory west of the Alleghany mountains. It is in these documents that we can feel the real pulse of the time. Nations, like individuals, are as a rule not clearly conscious of the prime motive prompting their actions. We cannot, therefore, expect the pamphleteers or *mémoire* writers of that time to tell us in set terms what was at the bottom of all that curiously persistent ill-will shown by most of the colonials to any kind of measures that the British Government proposed or decreed. Any kind, we say. For it is now well known, that the British Government repeatedly, and since 1774 almost invariably behaved with all the conciliation that a loyal colony can fairly expect from its metropolis. It was all in vain. Neither the moderation of Chatham, nor the wisdom of Burke; neither the cold imperiousness of King George or Lord North, nor the ingenious argumentativeness of Fox could alter matters. The colonials were, and had long been, but too well resolved to accept no other solution than that of a complete rupture. Once carried away, and justly too, by the great destiny awaiting them at the bidding of the powers of the very soil they occupied and legitimately desired to extend, they were naturally unable to listen to or accept any possible offer short of one securing for them, undisturbed and uncontrolled by British statutes or British capitalists, the vast expanse of fertile *Hinterland*, at

once the inexhaustible source of their material, and the safe guarantee of their national greatness.

It is customary to condemn George III., Lord North, Townshend and Grenville. But did Lord Chatham, Burke or Fox discern the true causes of the American revolt any more clearly? Did they seize the real, the ultimate cause of the colonials' discontent any better? In fact, harsh or strange as it may seem, if guilt there must be, there is little doubt that Lord Chatham had a greater share in the loss of the colonies than had either George III. or Lord North. The colonials may have had, as they actually had, very potent motives to wish for a separation from England. From such a wish, ever so legitimate, to its realization there was, however, a very far cry. England had never been more powerful, more enterprising, more dreaded, than from 1763 to 1775. Her navy had had great and decisive successes in European, American and Asiatic waters; and her armies had shown great fighting powers in Germany, America and India. For the first time in her history she found herself constituted as a real empire. Bengal, Behar and Orissa in India were hers, since 1764; the French were driven out of America, and their vast colonies conquered; in Europe her prestige was very great. Last not least, together with that unprecedented expansion of power—political and military—England just then started on her imposing career as the first industrial power of the world. Inventions in technology, such as no other nation could boast, were made in Great Britain almost daily, and the resources of British industry and commerce created a national wealth that bade fair to outstrip that of all other

nations put together. Under such circumstances it was by no means easy to start a revolt against England with any sound hopes of ultimate success. Had Lord Chatham, in 1766 or 1767, practised the wise moderation of Bismarck in 1866, he could have, by depriving the American colonials of French help, so isolated them as to render any decisive military success on their part practically impossible. Bismarck in 1866 suddenly, and in the midst of the most signal military triumph over Austria, abandoned the secular policy of Prussia towards Austria. He clearly perceived that that policy had, after Sadowa, no *raison d'être* any longer. Far from yielding to the Prussian military party, which loudly clamoured for triumphal entry into Vienna, Bismarck threatened rather to commit suicide than to consent to any unnecessary humiliation of Austria, whose friendship he knew he would need later on, after having neutralized or paralyzed its hostility. Lord Chatham, after 1763, was placed in exactly the same position to France that Bismarck held towards Austria in August, 1866. Hitherto, *i.e.* up to 1763, France had been in reality, for various reasons, the hereditary enemy of England. After 1763 that enmity, had, on the part of England, lost all its *raison d'être.* England had no more colonies to take from France; and no continental possession (Hanover) to dread from either Prussia or France. Scotland had definitively accepted its place within Great Britain since 1746, and Ireland was quiet; French intrigues could stir up neither.

It was, then, the evident policy of Chatham to irritate France as little as possible, in fact, to obtain her friendship. France, from her position in the very

centre of all the Great Powers of the west, and also from her geographical configuration as both a sea- and land-power, France was almost more dangerous when on the defensive than when taking the offensive. In the latter case, France always roused (under Louis XIV. as well as under Napoleon) the hostility of the surrounding nations, and was obliged, even when unbeaten in the field, to give up her excessive ambition. When, however, France is on the defensive, she always can, and will be able to form one of the most formidable factors in war. She can strengthen both the naval and the land forces of her allies on the most considerable scale, and thus contribute decisively to the final result. From this evident lesson of French history, together with the consideration mentioned above, Chatham had all imaginable motives of good policy to abandon the secular idea of France as the hereditary enemy of England. The idea had no basis any longer. It was merely floating on the waters of political thinking by its very emptiness, by silly traditionalism.

There is no better proof for this statement than an ever so brief consideration of the international and diplomatic position created during and by the Seven Years' War (1756-1763) in Europe. The same problem that Chatham was confronted with in regard to the "hereditary enemy" of his country, presented itself also to three other great governments of the time, to France, to Austria and to Russia. In France an identical question had been mooted and intrigued about for some time. The Bourbons of France had always observed, as the keynote of their foreign policy, a very hostile attitude towards the Austrian

Habsburgs. The Habsburgs were the "hereditary enemy" of the Bourbons. In the fifties of the eighteenth century, however, Count Kaunitz, the then Austrian ambassador in Paris, and later on, his successor, Count Starhemberg, persuaded the French Government to abandon their secular enmity to Austria, and to conclude an alliance with the Habsburgs (December, 1756, and again in 1757) against Prussia. This amazing *volte face*, the triumph of the cunning and persistence of Kaunitz and Maria Theresa, was without question one of the least wise measures ever taken by a French king. That alliance could not, and did not, confer on France anything worth fighting for, and, as a matter of fact, proved to France a most fatal step, the immediate cause of all her disasters in America, Europe, and Asia from 1757 to 1763. It was concluded chiefly at the instigation of a young woman, La Marquise de Pompadour, the French king's mistress and first minister, who was destitute of the most elementary knowledge of politics.

The problem, then, that Chatham failed to seize adequately after 1763, the French Government, that is, the Marquise de Pompadour, likewise failed to comprehend in 1756. Not so the two other monarchs, both women. Maria Theresa, brought up in the firm belief of the hereditary hostility between Habsburg and Bourbon—a belief to which she gave unguarded expression even after the Franco-Austrian alliance—Maria Theresa wisely suppressed her feelings and acquiesced, under somewhat humiliating conditions, in a complete revolution in the foreign policy of her house. While she did not materially better her position by that unexpected move, yet she was able to inflict on

Frederick's lands and people, if not on him, all the horrors of a seven years' war which barely touched her own provinces.

The last of the women then controlling a great country was Katharine II. of Russia. In 1762 she came to the throne, and soon rid herself of her insipid husband. She, too, was at once called upon to decide on the sense and direction of her foreign policy, more especially of that towards her neighbour, Prussia. At that time the Russians, as well as the Russian Government, had a firm belief that Prussia was the "hereditary enemy" of the Muscovites. Katharine's predecessor, the Czarina Elizabeth, had sacrificed millions of money, and hundreds of thousands of men to that belief. But Katharine was not to be impressed by mere Chauvinist illusions. She clearly saw that Prussia, at enmity with France and Austria, could never become dangerous to Russia, while, on the other hand, Prussia was too poor to be a promising booty for Russia. So the late German princess, now Czarina of Russia, publicly declared with great show of indignation, that she too would unswervingly continue the old Russian policy of hostility to that arch-fiend, the King of Prussia; in private, however, she sent, on the evening of the same day, a special courier to Frederick, assuring him that her public declaration was only meant *pour le roi de Prusse* so to speak, or for the gallery in Russia. Nothing can prove Katharine's genius more conclusively. In assuring Frederick of her friendship, she proved what all Russo-Prussian history has long shown ever since, the correctness of her view, in that neither of the two countries has had, since 1762, a serious reason to make war on the other.

It is somewhat discomforting to note that two women, Katharine and Maria Theresa, grasped the essentials of the political situation about the middle of the eighteenth century far better than did "the only man," to use Frederick's saying, to whom England had given birth at the same time. Chatham, before and after the treaty of 1763, invariably viewed France as *the* great enemy of England. He never tired of rousing the British national feeling against the "hereditary enemy." He could not but be aware that one single article of that treaty (Article XIII.) was alone sufficient to fill the French with an undying thirst for revenge. In that article France consented to the destruction of the fortifications of her harbour at Dunkirk, in the most humiliating fashion. It is said in that article: "La Cunette [at Dunkirk] sera détruite immédiatement après l'échange des ratifications du présent traité, ainsi que les forts et batteries qui défendent l'entrée du côté de la mer; et il sera pourvu, en même temps, à la salubrité de l'air, et à la santé des habitants par quelque autre moyen à la satisfaction du Roi de la Grande Bretagne." A high-spirited nation will never accept such arrogant dealing with a harbour and place of arms on her immediate territory. And if one considers, that England, by the acquisition of Canada and the vast American *Hinterland* had then acquired a territory more than sufficient for the widest imperial expansion of the British nation for generations to come, and all that at the expense of France, it is rather difficult to comprehend why Chatham should still persist in the rancorous hatred of France, a country no longer in a condition to either hurt or thwart the most ambitious hopes of Great Britain.

Yet so he did. Instead of doing what Katharine did with regard to Prussia, in 1762, or Bismarck with regard to Austria in 1866, Chatham continued to inflame his people with the old, now groundless hatred of France. It may be that his grave bodily infirmities reduced the clearness of his mind. At any rate, instead of pacifying France by all possible means, he never ceased to widen and envenom the wound from which France and the French were smarting.

Under these circumstances it is only a matter of course that the French, a nation whose energy may be slackened but never suppressed, were eagerly on the look-out for an opportunity to avenge the treaty of 1763 on the English. Nor did that opportunity fail to turn up. It was, in the first place, one of a more academic character, but it soon transformed itself into a chance of resorting to the gravest military and political measures. The academic interference of the French with the immense American colonies of the English proceeded in the shape of the impression exercised by the French Encyclopaedists on the colonials.

The influence of Diderot, Rousseau, Montesquieu, Voltaire, Holbach, Condorcet, d'Alembert, and the other great authors of the famous *Encyclopédie Méthodique*, on the whole mental attitude of Europe and America in the latter half of the eighteenth century, seems rather puzzling to the modern mind. On reading the articles of the *Encyclopédie* (articles, it must be admitted, artfully garbled by the timorous publisher) one cannot but be amazed both at the mildness and inaggressiveness of their tone, and at the relatively small originality of their ideas. In our times, we have seen articles and books propounding doctrines

infinitely bolder and more radical. The novelty of the *Encyclopédie* was not in its doctrines; its historic position was determined by the marvellous effect it had on its contemporaries. Doctrines formerly discussed in Latin folios meant for recluse scholars; such as the political views of Spinoza, or of Althusius, were now for the first time placed before the general public in a form at once solid and attractive. To this the personality of the Encyclopaedists contributed not a little. The brilliant men meeting in the salons or *bureaux d'esprit* of those famous female *virtuose* of tact and charm, Madame Geoffrin, Mademoiselle de L'Espinasse, Madame d'Epinay, and others, were one and all men of intense powers of personal fascination. Their conversations were listened to, reported, and read all over the civilized world, and it is probably understating the reality when we compare the influence of the conversations, letters, and pamphlets of the Encyclopaedists to the moral and intellectual influence exerted nowadays by the "leaders" and articles of the great representatives of the press.

One of the most impressive of the works of the Encyclopaedists was the *Du Contrat Social* of Rousseau, published in 1762. Written in language the splendour and clearness of which have rarely been equalled, it contains a body of political teaching appealing with a passionate warmth to the deepest political cravings of the masses. It was inevitable that a political work by the author of *La Nouvelle Héloise* and *Emile*, then the most famous novels of the day, should rapidly find their way into the colonies in America, where the latent and unavowed

wishes of the people made them only too prone to views such as Rousseau propagated in language aglow with all the inspirations of passion and truth. It is certain, and can easily be proved in detail, that the political views of the wayward Genevese and of his colleagues of the *Encyclopédie* had a very considerable effect on the colonials, amongst whom they were eagerly read and discussed. The "imponderable" influence of these French ideas must not be undervalued, although it cannot be credited with a force of the first magnitude. Far greater was the second, or more material interference of France in the great struggle of the colonials against Great Britain.

That material influence was set in motion chiefly by a man whose entire moral and literary personality seemed to destine him for exploits of a totally different kind. We mean Beaumarchais. A Parisian *pur sang*, full of the inexhaustible verve and dash of his own immortal creation, "Figaro" in his *Le Mariage de Figaro*, Beaumarchais was watchmaker, inventor, harpist to the court, promoter of interminable and vast business enterprises, publisher of Voltaire's works, author of an immortal comedy, incomparable pamphleteer, involved in endless intrigues, duels, adventures, and political secret missions to England and Germany—in short, a man of the most astounding vitality and resourcefulness. His wit and superb literary gift irradiated the most commonplace of his actions, and his fundamentally honest and generous nature ennobled his life with the glory of true manliness. Bold, intrepid, a battler and fighter of a thousand combats legal or political, he was all through his life a warm-hearted, true man. No one

could have applied Rostand's famous lines with greater aptness to himself:

> "Et tout couvert d'exploits qu'en rubans je m'attache
> Retroussant mon esprit ainsi qu'une moustache,
> Je fais, en traversant les masses et les ronds,
> Sonner les vérités comme des éperons!"

It was this "frivolous Frenchman" who had long made up his mind to avenge his country on England, and to wipe out the shame of the treaty of 1763 in the most terrible loss ever caused to Great Britain. He clearly foresaw the war long before it actually broke out, and by means of incessant memorializing the French, and later on the Spanish Government too, he inspired Vergennes, the great foreign minister of France, and likewise Aranda, Vergennes' colleague in Spain, and prevailed upon them to join his vast plans. At first two, then more, million francs were placed at the disposal of the author of "Figaro" by the two Bourbon Governments, and Beaumarchais, almost two years before France and Spain openly declared war against England, established his headquarters at Le Havre, under the name of *Rodrigue Hortalès et Cie.* It was from Havre that Beaumarchais sent to the Americans vast stores of tents, provisions and equipments of all kinds, amongst others, 30,000 rifles, over 200 cannon, etc., in 1776 and 1777. "His fleets," as he called them, were in constant connection with the colonials, and his lieutenants, more particularly de Kalb and the indispensable Steuben, were organizing the army of the colonials. His correspondence with his captains, officers, and his home government; his dealings, frequently far from pleasant, with Arthur Lee, Silas

Deane, and the stately and prudent Franklin in Paris, were numberless. He never was at a loss how to meet the countless emergencies of financial or military embarrassment, and it is only the sober truth to say, that without his genius and energy the Americans could not have carried on the war in the first two years. With all the staunch vigour and honesty of Washington, the American army, as is now well known, suffered, very severely from desertion, treachery, indifference, pusillanimity. It was France, it was, previous to the summer of 1778, Beaumarchais, who never flagged, never despaired, never failed to send help where help was most needed. His merit was never recognized by the government of the Republic, and when, many years later, reduced almost to indigence, he asked for partial reimbursement of his undoubted personal losses in the service of the United States, he and his children met with the coldest and, let us confess it, most unjustified ingratitude. No statue to his honour has ever been erected in any public place in America; to most Americans he is either quite unknown, or known only as a clever playwright. The Americans have, very late it is true, but at last raised a statue to Rochambeau, one of the two Frenchmen to whom the clinching victories in 1781 are due. One would like to entertain the hope that they will see their way to raise several similar monuments to him who, more than any other single non-military man, helped them to raise the noble fabric of their national independence.

The war itself, although its extent both in time and space was one of the most considerable dimensions, is in reality a very simple event. It lasted for eight years

and was carried on in the eastern territory of the United States, and in nearly all the seas. The strategic problem was reduced to the question of sea-power. As long as the British were able to hold the Atlantic, they could easily pour ever new armies (if mostly hired ones) into the colonies. Once the British lost the command of the sea, their hold on the American colonies was practically lost. The colonials, by their victory at Saratoga in October, 1777, where less than 4,000 British soldiers, under Burgoyne, were forced to surrender to 14,000 colonials, under Gates, had practically secured the possession of the northern colonies before the third year of the war was over; but New York, the central, and the southern colonies were still controlled by Clinton, Cornwallis, and other British commanders. However, in August and September, 1781, the French, under the Comte de Grasse, baffled all the attempts of the British admirals, Hood and Graves, to enter Chesapeake Bay for the purpose of relieving Cornwallis, who was besieged in Yorktown by a Franco-American army consisting of about 7,000 men each under Rochambeau and Washington. The naval engagements of de Grasse lasted for five days, and were fought off Cape Henry. This all-important battle, or series of battles, which definitively deprived the British of the command of the sea in the middle Atlantic, and which sealed the fate of Cornwallis; this naval Waterloo of the British—is one of the least noticed military events of modern times. Not one Englishman or American in ten thousand has ever heard the name of the battle of Cape Henry. The full details of that clinching victory have never been published, and in books on the American War the battle

is, as a rule, given neither its precise name, nor placed in the right historic perspective. It was, in reality, not a very dramatic affair. This, however, need not deceive anyone into a false construction of its fundamental importance. Battles, like men, are important, not for their dramatic splendour, but for their efficiency and consequences. The battle of the White Mountain, in 1620, was really no serious fight at all; while the battle of Marengo, in 1800, was, as far as Napoleon was concerned, a positive defeat of the French army. Yet by the "affair" of the White Mountain the Bohemians have lost their independence to the present day; and by Marengo, Napoleon, or rather Desaix, established the first *Empire*. The battle off Cape Henry had ultimate effects infinitely more important than those of Waterloo. Even the naval victories won by Le Bailli de Suffren in the seas between Madras and Ceylon over the British fleet in 1782 and 1783, cannot, in point of effect, compare with the decisive advantage obtained by de Grasse off Cape-Henry. Suffren's victories remained barren; de Grasse's action entailed upon the British the final loss of the thirteen colonies in America. What the French Encyclopaedists had done by suggestion, and what Beaumarchais had set in movement by ingenious personal exertion, de Grasse had brought to a final termination by a successful naval engagement.

It is customary to accuse Napoleon of having foolishly overreached himself. It is likewise a commonplace to blame Louis XIV. for an ambition striving for the absurd idea of subjugating Europe. It is less known that George III. failed in his attempt of retaining the thirteen colonies within the British Empire

chiefly because of an ambition essentially identical with that of either Napoleon or Louis XIV. King George did not, it is true, try to dominate Europe, he only attempted to defy the leading powers of Europe. While fighting the Americans, he had the boldness to fight the French, the Spanish, and the Dutch too, rousing at the same time the hostility of the Baltic Powers. As Louis XIV., for a similar defiance, suffered the defeats of Blenheim, Turin, and Malplaquet; and as Napoleon, for the same crime of *lèse-Europe*, was crushed at Leipsic and at Waterloo; so King George, committing the same fatal error, lost England's principal force, her sea-power, and thus the vastest and most fertile colonies ever possessed by an empire. Europe, the heir of Hellenic intellect and Roman military strength, can be defied neither by any one or two European powers, nor by the rest of the non-European countries put together. Persia fell for defying Hellas; Carthage sank for opposing Rome; the United States arose mainly owing to England's unwise defiance of Europe in the eighteenth century.

## II

### THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.—I

THE French Revolution is undoubtedly the most important event of modern history. As we cannot distinctly trace its origin, so we cannot clearly point out its termination in time or space; for like a great wave in agitated seas it is still spreading to countries that in the eighteenth century took no notice of it; and as a matter of fact it seems more adequate to consider the French Revolution as only one part of an immense European revolution which assumed a political and aggressive form in France, while in Germany it was clothed in forms literary and philosophical. It is more than a coincidence that the vast revolutionary upheaval in France culminated in the immense personality of Napoleon; while in Germany the equally vast intellectual stir culminated in the Jupiter of German thought—Goethe.

The uniqueness and grandeur of the French Revolution are alone sufficient to render an explanation exceedingly difficult, more especially when we attempt, as we should, to give a specific explanation.

It has been customary to account for historical facts by general ethical remarks on human nature, or on the temper of the French, of the German, or the English.

However, the very generality of these explanations deprives them of any real value.

For the historian proper, the problem of the French Revolution stands thus: how are we to account for the outbreak of that Revolution under Louis XVI., considering that the long reign of Louis XV. (1715-1774) was to all intents and purposes a far more likely time for a revolution in France?

Under Louis XV. the French people had an ever-increasing number of motives to criticise, to fall foul of, to attack, and finally to subvert the government. Many of those abuses were removed under Louis XVI., in fact, the government of Louis XVI. under Turgot, Necker, even Calonne, worked heroically at the removal of the worst abuses of the old French monarchy.

Moreover, the foreign policy of Louis XVI. was, in comparison with that of Louis XV., a most brilliant advance. Louis XV. was mortally humiliated by England in the Peace of 1763. England was mortally humiliated in turn by Louis XVI. in the Peace of 1783. Vergennes, at the head of foreign policy in France under Louis XVI., was in the highest degree successful, and yet the people, far from acknowledging the good intentions of the government at home, and its great successes abroad, continued to be dissatisfied, and finally broke out in the ever famous Revolution of 1789. Unless we can account for this specific date, or at any rate for the connection of the Revolution with Louis XVI.'s reign, we have fulfilled but very poorly our real task as historian.

If now we view the well-known works of Taine, Tocqueville, Sybel, Buckle, Sorel, and others, on the French Revolution, we shall at once see that neither

the apparently scientific and cold analysis of Taine, nor the philosophical reflections of Tocqueville, neither the laborious arguments of the learned German professor, nor the dignified diplomatic phrases of Sorel, have in reality advanced our insight into the causes of the French Revolution.

After all these, and similar authors, we still fail to see (1) why the French Revolution broke out under Louis XVI. and not before, and (2) why it at once assumed dimensions so colossal, so intense, as to dwarf any other historical movement, such as the Renaissance or the Reformation into comparative insignificance.

The sober truth is, we do not understand the French Revolution. Auerbach once said that most people were not yet "*Goethe reif*" (*i.e.*, ripe for the understanding of Goethe). We must confess that we are not yet "Revolution-ripe"; and that, in spite of the serious and philosophical studies devoted to that Revolution, the best part of our knowledge of that great event is probably still contained in the classical witticism of Boerne: "One man alone could have prevented the French Revolution—Adam—if he had drowned himself before his marriage."

While acknowledging the exceeding difficulty of accounting for the French Revolution, we might yet try to point out one or two of the circumstances hitherto unnoticed or neglected as the precursors, if not the specific causes of the French Revolution.

It is well known that the prevalent opinion ascribes the French Revolution to the intolerable anarchy and oppression degrading the people of France under the *ancien régime.*

Works, such as the books of the famous Arthur Young, who travelled through France shortly before the outbreak of the French Revolution, are quoted to prove the utter misery of the peasantry and smaller *bourgeoisie*, and the wretched decadence of the nobility. However, it has long been proved that Arthur Young had been completely taken in by the most artful of innocents in Europe, *i.e.*, by the peasantry of France. It is indeed somewhat grotesque to assume, as Arthur Young did, that any peasant would reveal to him what he as a rule does not even communicate to his wife, that is, all the details of his household and farm.

We now positively know that in districts of France where the people were stated (by Arthur Young) to have been utterly poor, they had during that time made extensive purchases of land and farms. The economic history of peasants cannot be written from their own oral statements. It must be looked for in acts of notaries and other legal documents.

The alleged misery of the people under the *ancien régime* was, it is now admitted, very much less severe under Louis XVI. than under Louis XV. On the other hand, we have positive knowledge (not only from the well-known discourse of Savaron) that the people under Louis XIII. (1614) were literally crushed down by the most abject misery.

It is true that Savaron said to Louis XIII.: "Que diriez-vous, sire, si vous aviez vu dans vos pays de Guyenne et d'Auvergne les hommes paître l'herbe à la manière de bêtes?" Yet the (Catholic) people never rose under Louis XIII.

The circumstance above alluded to as probably

one of the preparatory causes of the French Revolution is the startling homogeneity of the French people. In modern times, more especially in America, we are so used to the phenomenon of millions of people conforming to one and the same standard of religion, opinions, dress and manners, that we easily forget that in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries such homogeneous masses were by far the exception. In the seventeenth century a Provençal or a Breton would have taken it almost as an insult to be called a Frenchman. In the seventeenth century, previous to 1685 (Revocation of the Edict of Nantes), there was in France a very considerable number of Huguenots, that is, people who had, beside the language, very little more in common with the rest of Catholic France. Nay, within Catholic France the Jansenists formed a most distinct, and most characteristically differentiated, group of people. In various provinces there still pulsated an autonomous life of their own, and the social strata were still so separated from one another as to make the *bourgeois* practically an impossibility in the refined drawing-rooms of the aristocracy or the court.

France was in the seventeenth century very far from being a homogeneous nation. The complaint of one class or one group found no echo in that of another group, and could thus acquire no momentum of political importance. Complaints (*doléances*) such as were submitted by the whole of France in 1788-89, were of frequent occurrence, even in the seventeenth century; but the complaints of one province, or sect, or class met with so little encouragement on the part of other provinces, sects, or classes, that they invariably ended by sheer indifference and neglect. When, on

the other hand, we regard France under Louis XVI. we are struck with a most remarkable homogeneity of the people.

The Huguenots had been expelled in 1685; the Jansenists suppressed by the Bull *Unigenitus*, 1713. The autonomous rights and local political life of various provinces had been levelled out by the great centralizations of Colbert, Louvois and the other great ministers of Louis XIV., and the *bourgeoisie* under Louis XV. had penetrated into most of the aristocratic *salons*. The *bourgeois* furnished the great types of the stage, they monopolized nearly the whole intellect of France, and claimed successfully the recognition of social equality.

This homogeneity then had caused the mental attitude of most Frenchmen to be the same, at least with regard to certain fundamental principles of politics, philosophy and society. This homogeneity must, we take it, be admitted as the first and indispensable condition of the great event called the French Revolution. For what do we find? As soon as clever or important thoughts on politics were published in Paris, whether in pamphlet form, in a book, or in a discourse (whether it was Turgot, Necker, Condorcet, the Abbe Sieyès, or some provincial municipality), the rest of France, or certainly the majority of Frenchmen, at once took it up, discussed it, refuted it, accepted it; in short, intensely interested themselves in it. This was a new phenomenon.

The obscure official in the Dauphiné, whose political reflections would have, thirty years before, fallen stillborn from the press, was now, in the eighties of the eighteenth century, sure of a hearing, of an audience,

of a general discussion. So great and intense was that growing homogeneity that it extended even to common human sentiments. From July 27th to August 1st, 1789 happened what is commonly called *La grande peur*. Suddenly, in a most inexplicable manner, the rural population of the whole of France was smitten with a most mysterious fear—with a common physical fear of brigands, robbers and burglars, who were expected to roam over the whole of France, sacking and pillaging everything they could lay hands on. The fear was pure imagination; there were no brigands, no burglars. The *grande peur* unmistakably proves that in addition and beyond the mental homogeneity of the people, there was a homogeneity of sentiments, of sensation. People thought the same way and felt the same way; nothing was more natural than that they should act the same way. For the first time in French history the French became conscious of their unity, as a people, and of their strength. Once the French people became conscious of their strength it was only too natural that they should attempt to assert their rights against the crown.

The crown, unfortunately, was then held by two persons, neither of whom had by nature or education the power to wield or to articulate the wishes of the people. King Louis XVI. was limited in mind, small in character, and indifferent in temper. Nothing characterizes him better than the famous entry in his diary on the day of the taking of the Bastille, that is, on the day when the most formidable onslaught on French monarchical institutions was made. *Rien*, "Nothing," was the entry in the King's diary for that day. As to Marie Antoinette, she was an Austrian proper, that

is, a woman endowed with many charms, but none of a serious character. Often, indeed, it may be said that she was possessed of deficiencies that had no corresponding virtues, and her very advantages were devoid of efficiency. She was pleasure-loving, indiscerning, hare-brained; she repelled all the men of importance, and loved to pass her time in the presence of mediocrities. Personally virtuous, she yet had none of the powers of female virtue. She resisted her passion for Fersen, the Swedish chevalier, and yet did not know how to make use of Fersen in critical moments. The powers of the French nation set in motion by the homogeneity mentioned above, could therefore be neither controlled nor guided by the King or the Queen. If we, moreover, consider the extreme prodigality of the Queen (she permitted Calonne to buy her St. Cloud and Rambouillet for a sum of about twenty million francs, at a time when the French finances were in the lowest possible condition), which was not likely to endear her to an exceedingly thrifty people like the French; and when we remember that in August, 1786, the famous necklace trial was practically decided against her, her prestige had suffered an irremediable loss.

The extraordinary circumstances so characteristic of the year 1789 had, it is true, given rise to an extraordinary man, who, as many have supposed, might have staved off the worst features of the French Revolution. That man was Mirabeau. He came of a high aristocratic family; but both through his genius and his failings, he had long unlearned the prejudices and reactionary ideas of the French nobility. His was a temper both passionate in sentiment and cool in judge-

ment. His insight into the political structure of the leading states of his time; his knowledge of the great issues of international policy; his acquaintance with all the leading men of his age, and, more than anything else, his power of focussing and generalizing huge clusters of facts, endowed him with a superiority that nobody could rival in his lifetime, and few have equalled after him. In practical politics, however, he suffered from a bad private reputation, from sordid indebtedness to innumerable creditors, and also from debauches that weakened both his bodily health and his prestige, so that even his marvellous oratory and political insight won for him more admiration than actual influence.

To say that Mirabeau might have warded or staved off the worst consequences of the French Revolution is probably an overstatement. On the other hand, it is certain that he alone amongst practical statesmen was the first to foresee the stages of the Revolution, and its final development into an empire ruled by an omnipotent Caesar. Finally, the early and premature death of Mirabeau (1791) deprived France of what was then her only possible leader, and so the fierce powers of the Revolution swept over the country and over Europe, without meeting any serious force that could control them.

Calonne, after having convoked the nobility in 1787, convinced himself and the King that the dissatisfaction of the nation, as well as the evils of the state, could be remedied only by the convocation of all the orders; accordingly in December, 1788, all the three orders, the nobility, clergy, and *Tiers-État*, or *bourgeoisie*, were convened, to meet in a common assembly

for the purpose of healing the wounds of the country. From January to April, 1789, the people of France, meeting in innumerable local assemblies, drew up their famous *cahiers de doléances* (lists of grievances), in which they criticised in the most sincere and audacious manner the abuses then prevalent, together with the persons then governing France. By an indirect method of election, over a thousand deputies or representatives were sent up to the capital, and thus the first genuine Parliament since 1614 was opened on May 5th at Versailles; the frivolous King, deciding for Versailles on account of the hunting parties in which he was there indulging.

The two superior orders, the nobility, and higher clergy, at first refused to join the *Tiers-État*, but the determined attitude of Mirabeau and the members of the *Tiers-État* in the end prevailed upon the nobility and higher clergy, and on June 27th, 1789, the three orders met in one and the same room, and constituted themselves as the *Assemblée Nationale*. That famous *Assemblée* has long been called the *Assemblée Constituante*.

Neither the King nor the Queen, let alone the numerous members of the Court were able or even willing to see the immense significance of the new assembly. The King, a Philistine to the backbone; the Queen, a girlish woman without any notion of politics, neither could nor would see that France had entered on an entirely new period of her history. It is probably injudicious to blame the royal couple for their shortsightedness, when we consider that one of the broadest and deepest minds of the United Kingdom—Edmund Burke—was utterly unable to view the events hap-

pening in France in their right historical perspective. A glance at Burke will readily induce us to absolve Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette. Burke, far from appreciating the immense significance of the French Revolution, devoted all his unrivalled power of oratory to a wholesale condemnation of that great event. Under these circumstances we need not wonder that Louis XVI. so utterly misread the spirit of his time that, on the 11th July, he dismissed the most popular of Ministers—Necker—and that on the 14th July the French demolished the Bastille, that symbol of absolutistic *régime*. The King was more than ever incapable of appreciating an event which threw all the liberal minds of Europe, including England, into a state of frenzied joy. But what the great philosopher of England and the small King of France were unable to see, several leading members of the French aristocracy were only too ready to acknowledge, and on the night of August 4th, 1789, the Duc de Noailles, and the Duc d'Aiguillon spontaneously proposed a wholesale abolition of all the ancient rights and privileges of the nobility. Thus the *ancien régime* was, under the pressure of the *Zeitgeist*, abolished by its very devotees.

In August, September and October the *Assemblée* proceeded to lay down in the most explicit, not to say *doctrinaire*, manner, the general principles governing the relation of the individual to the state. All the ideas of Rousseau, moderated by the practical wisdom of Mirabeau, were applied to build up on the ruins of the ancient state, a commonwealth based on the equality of citizens before the law, on the absence of all castes, on the absence of religious intolerance, and finally on the destruction of those local provin-

cialisms which had long prevented the French nation from blending into one homogeneous mass of equal citizens.

So far (1789-90) the worst enemies of the French cannot but admit that the French Revolution had kept within bounds, threatening nowise her neighbours or the other Powers of Europe. The French government had declared, that nothing was more removed from their minds than a policy of aggression, more particularly towards Prussia and England; the most explicit assurances were given that France desired neither the territories on the left bank of the Rhine, nor Belgium. However, the great powers were unable to rise to a clear and impartial view of the French Revolution, and were convinced that France would share the fate of Poland, *i.e.*, partition at the hands of her neighbours. The Great Powers, we say, were determined to force a war upon France. For, this is the historical fate of France, that any great French movement or event will inevitably rouse the apprehension, interest, or admiration of the rest of Europe to a greater extent than events happening in any other country. Nor is this circumstance difficult to explain. If, on a map of Europe, we place one point of the compass in the centre of France, say at Bourges, and the other point at Edinburgh, and then draw a circle round Bourges, we shall find that the greatest enemies and rivals of France are all at equal distances from Bourges—such as England, Berlin, Vienna, Rome, Madrid. This central position of France rendered any such event as the French Revolution of the highest importance to her neighbours, and a revolution spreading in what was then the centre of

Europe could not but affect the other great powers in the most direct fashion: and this (in addition to the undoubtedly moral and literary conquests that the French and French literature had made all over Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries) accounts for the fact that Europe took an infinitely greater interest in the French Revolution than it had taken in the great Civil War in England (1642-1651), or in the Dutch revolt (1566-1648). It was thus only a matter of expediency when the great powers determined to begin their actual invasion of France.

The Declaration of Pillnitz, in August, 1791, was only a stage thunder. In the spring of 1792 the Austrians, and in August, 1792, the Prussians also invaded France. The latter campaign is known by the name of the "Cannonade of Valmy," where the Prince of Brunswick, at the head of a considerable Austro-Prussian army, gave a half-hearted battle to the French under Dumouriez (in September, 1792), and finding himself unable to break the ranks of the French, retired into Germany.

Amongst the spectators present at that campaign was Goethe. In the evening, after the cannonade, Goethe, on being asked what he thought of the events of the day, answered: "Gentlemen, from this place and from to-day a new epoch of world-history is begun, and you may say that you have assisted at it." ("Hier und heute geht eine neue Epoche der Weltgeschichte aus, und ihr könnet sagen, ihr seid dabei gewesen.)

## III

### THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.—II

THE first period of the French Revolution, when the French people were filled with the highest ideals about liberty and community of nations, was ended in the month of June, 1791. In that fatal month the royal couple took the ill-advised measure of trying to escape from their people by a flight to Germany. The way the flight was prepared and carried out was singularly clumsy, and far from being astonished at the capture of the King by the postmaster of Varennes on the French frontier, one rather wonders that the King had not been discovered soon after leaving Paris.

He and the Queen were brought back to the capital amidst the sullen silence of an indignant nation. It now became clear that the animosity of the foreign Powers was shared by the King, and that the entire nation was at the mercy of a European conspiracy. There is no nation in Europe that has, in mediaeval or modern times, ever found itself in a situation so tragic, so exasperating. From all sides of the horizon the French people felt the underground and overt attacks of the rest of Europe. In Sweden and Russia, King Gustavus III., and Catherine the Great; in Austria and Prussia, Leopold II. and Frederick William II.;

in England and in all other countries, threats of invasion, menaces of the most terrible kind were levelled at the people whose King had just given unmistakable proofs of treachery and cowardice, which alone are sufficient to drive a nation into despair.

Yet the French people even then, under the most trying circumstances, continued to be loyal to the King, and instead of making open war on him—as had been done in England in 1642, when King Charles I. left London—the French people, after a few weeks, entrusted Louis XVI. with the government of the country. Even then very few people seriously thought of a republic, and Louis XVI. had many a fair chance of consolidating his shaken position. However, the plans of the Powers against France became so manifest; their intention of treating France as they had dealt with Poland in the seventies, became so evident; the War Party, headed by the Girondists and General Dumouriez, became by the end of 1791 so influential, that a conflict between France on the one hand and Europe on the other was only a question of days.

The actions of the Powers, more especially of Prussia and Austria, were based on a total misconception of the resources and conditions of France. The numerous *émigrés* from France had spread the belief (still shared by many historians) that the revolution in France was in reality only a local anarchy in Paris, countenanced in nowise by the bulk of the French nation. Moreover, the *émigrés* plausibly remarked that owing to the law of 1781 the French nation was, through the emigration of the nobles, deprived of their officers—officers in the French army since 1781 being aristocrats only.

The very atrocity of the situation, however, aroused

all the latent energy of the French nation, and when in September, 1792, the Prussians and Austrians advanced on the Rhine, the French, far from being cowed and discouraged, were more than ever determined to resist the unprovoked hostility of their allied enemies.

One need only read the proclamation, signed, if not drawn up by the Duke of Brunswick, and dated from Coblentz, to understand the heroic resolution of the French and their determination to defend their country —even at the most painful loss in men and money. That proclamation is unique in all history, unless we compare it with the actions of Attila, Genghis Khan, or some other barbarous "Scourge of heaven." Brunswick threatened the people of France to raze Paris to the ground, and to reduce their country to a desert, unless they restored the old monarchy and abandoned all the rights of the nation acquired since May, 1789.

This atrocious document was replied to by the French by the so-called September massacres. During five days, early in September, numerous individuals, many of them innocent or invalids, were massacred in the streets, hospitals and prisons of Paris by the mob maddened by the terror of the near extinction of France at the hands of the allies.

The horrors of those massacres can certainly not be excused; they are, however, in keeping with the behaviour of most nations in times of unexampled popular excitement.

In the great Civil War in England the popular excitement vented itself in the wholesale execution of so-called witches and sorcerers, of whom, as Mr. Lecky says, a greater number was cruelly put to death during

the great Civil War than during all the other periods of English history put together. From 1645 to 1647 over 150 witches were executed in the counties of Suffolk and Essex alone. The fascination of cruelty on an excited mob is a dark problem; but at any rate we may say that Danton, who did nothing to stop the September massacres, cannot seriously be held to be the author of those misdeeds. With the blind but unerring instinct of fierce animality, the people of France, who had on the 10th August, 1792, practically deposed the King, now, in the face of extreme danger, ventured to give a practical illustration of their unprecedented resolution to keep up the unity of France both against home and foreign assailants.

If we condemn the September massacres we must, at any rate, credit them also with a considerable share in the great victory of Valmy a few days later. In that battle, in itself an insignificant engagement, a new spirit, the spirit of a united and determined nation, was proved to be stronger than the might of Prussia and Austria. The enemy was driven out of the country; Dumouriez, the victor of Valmy, marched northward, and after inflicting upon the Austrians the defeat of Jemmapes, he pushed them back on the Rhine, and occupied Belgium and parts of Holland (autumn, 1792). The great victories won by the army, indefinitely increased the prestige of the Girondists—amongst whom Vergniaud, Gensonné, Guadet and Madame Roland were most influential, and they quickly brought the King to the block. And now at last France, clearly conscious of the exasperating hostility of Europe, took measures to intensify by concentration her powers of resistance, so abundant in that old historic country.

To the student of history the spectacle of France resisting single-handed the might of the rest of Europe is one which appeals very strongly both to his heart and to his mind. With the exception of the ancient Hellenes and the English under Elizabeth, no other nation of any magnitude has been given the means to go unaided through the grand trial of one nation fighting the world for the recovery of her independence and liberty. It is this standpoint which must be unwaveringly held in view to enable us to do justice to the events of 1793 and 1794; events, coloured, stained, distorted, and yet glorified by the most ruthless atrocities, as well as by the most astounding glory of events, military and human. That period is well known by the name of "La Terreur." It would be superfluous to enumerate or to describe the excesses committed by the men of the "Convention," or Third Parliament of the French Revolution. They are in all books, in thousands of novels, in numberless biographies and *Mémoires.*

The names of Marat, Hébert, Robespierre, Camille Desmoulins, Fouquier-Tinville, St. Just and other celebrities of "The Terror" are well known to everybody. What, however, must be pointed out, and of what most students of that period must constantly be reminded, is the undeniable connection and correlation between those atrocities, on the one hand, and the regeneration of France, nay, of Europe, accomplished by Frenchmen of that period, on the other. The unparalleled deeds and successes of the French generals in 1794-1795-1796; the host of social reforms introduced during "The Terror" and now all but universally accepted, could never have been thought of but for that

fierce and unparalleled energy of which the home excesses of the French were only the dark reverse.

He who studies "The Terror" in its totality, that is, the acts and measures taken by the French Parliament, by the *Comité de Salut Public*, by the leaders of the Paris municipality, cannot but arrive at the conclusion that while the Paris municipality and its wire-pullers represented the dark side of the medal, the *Comité de Salut Public* (whether under Danton or under Robespierre) represented the terrible determination of the French to keep up the unity and integrity of their country; and the "Convention" proper, or Parliament, endowed France with institutions securing order in peace and power in war. The *Comité de Salut Public*, the most centralized of all governments of modern times, really a *dictatura* in Committee, so efficiently organized the administrative and military services of the country, especially through its representatives in the provinces, that France was enabled to throw huge armies on the frontier, and, finally, in the battle of Fleurus, June, 1794, drive out the allies again from Belgium and Holland, let alone from Alsace. The "Convention," on the other hand, introduced the metrical system; reformed all the schools for higher education, legalized religious toleration, reformed the law, and anticipated in many of its measures the reorganization of France as completed by Napoleon I.

Consider the extreme shortness of time in which the French carried out legal and social reforms of the most comprehensive nature; compare the few years they needed for all that with the generations of labour and struggle required by other nations to obtain the

same result, and we are driven to the conclusion that such high-strung and unparalleled national activity was possible only at the instigation of a national exaltation, the over-exuberance of which was bound to lead to abuses. Or, instead of considering things and institutions, let us for a moment study the leading persons of that period. In them we find reflected the same energy, and hence the same abuses found in the nation at large.

The terrific push and dash of Danton, balanced by the most enthusiastic and true patriotism, aided by deep political insight into home and foreign matters, and glorified by the greatest rhetorical power of that time, stands out in sharp contrast to the vile, venomous, wretched ambition of the lawyer of Arras, the cold-blooded, villainous Robespierre, whose black soul is rendered only more disgusting by his sickly sentimentality; in M. Camille Desmoulins and his fierce power as a publicist and speaker; in St. Just, with his Draconic severity in carrying out matters for the salvation of his country; in so many anonymous heroes for whom death had lost its terrors; in the numerous women, from Charlotte Corday, who, a young girl of perfect innocence, found the force to murder the fiend Marat; in Madame Roland, in all the other well-known characters of the French Revolution, we note the whole scale of human energy in all its shades reflecting the vast impulse with which the French Revolution imbued the French nation. If Europe by her most interested action must be declared to have provoked many an excess of the French Revolution, the glory of having turned the new vital powers of the nation to the realization of reforms and to exploits

of the first order, remains entirely with the French. In March, 1793, every foot of the French frontier on land and on sea was attacked by all the Powers of Europe. Fifteen months later all the land Powers had been driven back and beaten by the French, while the might of England on sea could boast only one barren victory, the battle of the 1st June, 1794, when Howe, although disabling the fleet of Villaret de Joyeuse, was unable to prevent a large French convoy from the West Indies from entering Brest. The decisive victories of the French in the summer of 1794 rendered the anarchy at home objectless, and the victories of the army "furiously conspired" against Robespierre. He and his followers suffered death on the Place de la République, the fate of Danton, Hébert, and so many other "Conventionnels," and in 1795 the Directoire was introduced, a government which was neither in person nor constitution either important or helpful. Very early in 1795 the Republic had succeeded in making peace with Prussia, and Spain by the Treaty of Basle (1795). The military position of France was excellent, and the centre of disturbances came more and more to fall outside France. Already in 1769 and onward, French, or rather European, history begins to spell that name that dominated the events of the world until 1815—Napoleon!

## IV

### NAPOLEON.—I

OF all the characters of modern history Napoleon has been most admired and most condemned. He is generally credited with having been the greatest captain of modern times, one of the greatest statesmen and at the same time one of the most selfish and ruthless characters on record. On the other hand, numerous historians, both French and non-French, are almost fanatic in their unconditioned admiration of the genius as well as of the character of the great emperor. The number of documents, books and essays published on the career of the incomparable Corsican is so immense, and is being increased so constantly, that we might easily indulge in the belief that we are at present fully equipped for an equitable and adequate appreciation of Napoleon. However, as in the case of the French Revolution, we must not for a moment ignore the fact that we are as yet not in a position to pass final sentence on a man whose personality was deeper and more complex than that of Goethe; whose diplomatic activity was more comprehensive than that of Richelieu, Kaunitz and Metternich put together; whose military exploits covered the whole of Europe and parts of Africa and Asia; and whose activity as a

legislator was so immense that modern France may truly be said to be the direct offspring of the administrative measures and institutions decreed by Napoleon.

Personality as a rule does not yield to analysis; but when personality becomes one of dimensions so vast and of depths so unfathomable as was that of the great Emperor of the French, all the resources of psychological or ethical analysis fail us. If, moreover, one considers the incredible mass of misrepresentations spread wholesale all over the Napoleonic literature in Europe and America, the pose of so many modern historians as judges on a man like Napoleon cannot but seem absurd. Every student of history knows that nearly three hundred and fifty years after the death of Charles V. we are not yet in a position to pronounce definitely on the character and historical position of that sombre Habsburg. It is absurd to think that we are already capable of giving a right historical perspective to a ruler of infinite superiority to Charles V., and whose death occurred not quite three generations ago. If in any case of historical study, it is certainly with regard to Napoleon that the student must give up the faintest tendency to rash and immodest judgement. The actions and facts made or directly inspired by Napoleon are in number so immense that by picking out some of them one can easily believe Napoleon to have been afflicted with the greatest or most villainous of vices; just as by selecting other facts one can demonstrate him to have been a man of the most exalted and sublime character. Like every great doer, Napoleon did both good and bad actions, generous and mean ones, he was grateful and ungrateful.

In 1796-97, on the Bridge of Lodi or in the swamps of Arcole, he showed extraordinary physical courage. In 1814, after his first abdication, he showed extreme physical cowardice. He was an excellent husband, yet he brutally divorced his first wife, whom at heart he never ceased to love. He was a faithful son and brother, yet he treated, at times, the members of his family with extreme severity. Nor need we be astonished at all that. It is the symptom and essence of a great personality to harbour in one and the same soul the most conflicting qualities, the most contradictory tendencies. Napoleon, who can properly be compared only to Alexander the Great and Caesar, showed in his varied life the same bewildering mass of apparently incoherent phenomena that has made a judgement on the great king of Macedon and on the founder of the Roman Empire a matter of the utmost difficulty. To the present day we are still under the influence of Caesar, let alone of Napoleon. Broad and comprehensive facts still bespeak the unique greatness of the two men, and to the present day the opinions on Caesar differ as widely as do those on Napoleon.

While it is thus impossible to bracket the character and genius of Napoleon into one neat formula of ethical judgement, it is, we take it, not quite impossible to account for the strange fact that the greatest statesman and captain of modern times came from an obscure and, in point of European history, quite unimportant little island, from Corsica. Twice in modern times we may notice this peculiar connection of a political mind of the first magnitude with a "*locus*" of origin quite out of proportion with the ultimate result. The builder of the mightiest body politic in

modern times, the originator of the most important and in many ways the most imposing political association of the last four centuries, St. Ignatius Loyola, the founder of the Jesuits, came from the obscure, poor, and insignificant country of the Basques. The man whose powerful mind has framed, animated, and organized the "Society of Jesus" was a Basque. In the case of Napoleon, however, we can do more than merely state the interesting fact that the first Emperor of the French in modern times came from Corsica.

The Corsicans, although their history has generally been ignored, were in reality one of the most remarkable nations in the Mediterranean. Unlike the people of the island of Sardinia who have at no time in history played an important *rôle*, the Corsicans had been waging a secular war against the mighty republic of Genoa, and forty years before the birth of Napoleon the Corsicans fought that war of national resistance not only against the Genoese but frequently against mighty French armies too. So great was their military capacity and genius that they repeatedly defeated both the French and Genoese armies, and that it was only at the end of forty years' uninterrupted fighting that the French were enabled to take possession of the island to some extent. During these great national fights, Arrigo de la Rocca, the Paolis, and numerous other Corsicans showed the greatest genius for military and political work, and Napoleon Bonaparte may be said to be only the climax of a long series of heroes who, trained in the most unequal war, had naturally acquired gifts of perspicacity such as at that time no other European nation had the opportunity of obtaining. At any rate, we cannot, in an estimate of Napoleon's

military genius, omit the fact that he lived in one of those border countries attacked by neighbouring and mighty empires in which at times the constant habit of fighting against great odds has brought to light the Themistocles, the Robert Bruces, the Shamyls, etc., and Napoleon.

However, to point out only the Corsican antecedents of Napoleon would be manifestly unfair to the connection of Napoleon with France proper. It cannot be denied that Napoleon was the embodiment and final culminating development of the French Revolution. That that great event would ultimately lead to some towering personality was, long before the advent of Napoleon, common belief of most Frenchmen, and of most thinking persons outside France. Napoleon himself, at St. Helena, repeatedly expressed his conviction that had he not been the Emperor of the French, somebody else would have played his *rôle*. The French, after trying every possible party, could not but see that the salvation of the country was neither in the moderates nor in the radicals; neither in the return to the laws of the *ancien régime*, nor in the maintenance of an absolutely democratic republic. Under these circumstances it was evident that only one powerful will and mind was able to steer France through the maze of wars and policies that had ever since 1795 completely changed and displaced the old political life of Europe. It is, moreover, a usual phenomenon in history that vast and deeply agitated movements, whether of a political or a mental character, are terminated by the appearance of a personality which combines their various elements and thus controls them. Thus arose the great founders of religions at the end of long, sometimes secular re-

ligious revolutions; so came Henry IV. to France, Cromwell to England, Bismarck to Germany.

The relation of these great personalities to their time is that of the blossom to the leaf and stem. They can neither be said to have created their time, nor to be nothing but the creation thereof—they are both. Napoleon is unthinkable without the French Revolution, and the French Revolution without Napoleon would represent only wild and bootless anarchy. The French Revolution *and* Napoleon form the most important event in modern history.

In person this extraordinary man was small, well-knit, with classical features, of robust health, and most temperate in his habits. He ate very little and drank less; his usual beverage being a little Sauterne. In youth he was very thin and pale; after his thirty-eighth year he became rather bloated and heavy. He required little sleep and took it at odd times during the day or the night. His power of work was immense; he frequently tired out a number of secretaries without in the least feeling fatigued himself, and could turn from one subject to another without the least effort. He used to say that all the subjects and persons interesting him were put away into so many "drawers," and when he wanted subject "A" he only pulled out its respective "drawer." His love and sense of detail was just as remarkable as his power of grasping great dominating traits covering an immense array of details. He delighted in reading military reports of the minutest kind, and his memory had stored away all the numberless details of his armies, his ships, his fortresses and his officials, of all of which he had the most accurate and ready knowledge. He frequently cor-

rected reports, sent to him by his governors or agents, about far-off provinces from memory without consulting any reference book or minutes. In fact, it is quite correct to say that his mind was essentially "topographical," that is, on his mind was impressed a huge map of Europe in which every physical feature, such as mountains, rivers, lakes, brooks, ravines, passes, gorges, were carefully entered together with all the political and social information of each country. For great as his genius was, his successes were undoubtedly due to superior information in the first place.

Like Richelieu, who through his *intendants* was the best-informed man in France about the actual state of his country, so Napoleon, trusting nobody, invariably had the most accurate personal information about the country he was going to contend with; and although he mostly fought in countries of which very detailed maps had long been made, yet he constantly demanded fresh and better maps. He despatched his best-trained officers to survey anew even such a well-known country as Bavaria, and he was constantly studying all the maps he could secure. In addition to that he had the real "objective" temper which enables the man of genius to see things not in the light of our desire or personal "bias," but in their own light.

Nobody was more just to the capacity or resources of his enemies, or less conceited with regard to his own genius than Napoleon. As a rule he neither over-rated nor under-rated his enemies. His strategical classical victory at Ulm in 1805 was due mainly to his correct appreciation of the Austrian general, Mack, who was then generally held to be a strategist of the

first order, whom Napoleon, however, rightly judged to be a muddle-headed *dilettante.*

On the other hand, Napoleon fully appreciated the gifts of Archduke Charles, his great opponent. And as with individuals, so with nations, whatever judgement he passed in public for political purposes (such as the famous words spoken of the English that they were "*une nation de boutiquiers*" (a nation of shopkeepers), in his correspondence with his friends and officials we note that he had a very just appreciation of the great qualities of the English, and even of those of the Portuguese and Spanish. His successes, therefore, were based on the best attainable information and on incessant work; we need, therefore, not be astounded that his unprecedented military victories have always been considered to follow rather from a systematic strategy, or, as he used to say, *des règles de l'art*—than from mere luck or fortunate incident.

There is now little doubt that Napoleon was the greatest strategist of modern times. The word *strategy*, although in constant use in newspapers and in common conversation, is rarely grasped in its technical and true meaning. It may be reduced to a very simple expression, in fact, to a single word. Strategy really means a line. The line of operations, that is, the direction which leads a general, if he is victorious, to a decisive victory; to one that forces his opponent to surrender. In campaigns it is not sufficient to win battles. There has scarcely ever been a general of any note who has not won a greater or smaller number of engagements. What makes a general is not the number of his tactical victories, nor the number of persons and arms taken. It is only the rapidity of decisive actions

that constitutes a great general. Military leaders who make their points only after wearisome fighting for years and years, entailing enormous loss of men and treasure, may, indeed, be called good generals, but they are certainly not great strategists. In the Thirty Years' War, for instance, although the number of clever and efficient generals on both sides was very great, there was only one great general—Gustavus Adolphus; for he alone knew where and when to give battle, and he alone arrived rapidly at a decisive and final success. To make this point absolutely clear we have only to compare the campaign of Napoleon in 1805, on the Upper Danube, with the campaign of Marlborough and Prince Eugène in the same region almost exactly one hundred years before, in 1704.

The military problem that both Marlborough and Napoleon had to solve was practically identical. For Marlborough and Eugène's main point was to separate the French general, Tallard, from his German ally, the Bavarian elector, Max Emmanuel; in other words, to prevent the junction of the French and Bavarian armies. In Napoleon's case the problem was to prevent the junction of the Austrian general, Mack, at and around Ulm, with his ally, the Russian general, Kutusow. Marlborough and Eugène were unable to prevent the junction of their opponents, and were therefore forced to fight a formidable battle, the battle of Blenheim, entailing severe loss on both of them. Napoleon, on the other hand, so arranged the marches of the various columns, and so successfully duped Mack as to the real route of the French army, that Mack's army, with slight exceptions, was forced to surrender

to Napoleon after a few unimportant engagements. These remarks are made from a purely technical standpoint; for, historically, everyone knows that Marlborough was in a considerably less advantageous position than was the Emperor, owing to his (Marlborough's) being hampered by the Dutch and the German princes. It is for this reason that Napoleon's campaigns to the present day are constantly being studied in all the military schools, whereas even in Prussia or Germany the campaigns of Frederick, with few exceptions, are never made the subject of elaborate study in military schools.

The campaigns of Napoleon are, indeed, typical and classical campaigns; they are dominated by a leading and general strategic idea arising from a complete knowledge of the country. Thus in 1796 we see Napoleon enter Italy from the south on the so-called *Corniche*, or the route from Savona to Genoa, and in 1800 again we see him enter Italy by the Lake of Geneva and the Little St. Bernard.

His dominating idea was to place himself between the enemy and the enemy's communications. In addition to that, he invariably sacrificed minor points to the essential points. Even in 1809, when he was again forced to fight Austria in the valley of the Danube, he intentionally ignored the so-called Walcheren expedition, that is to say, the forty thousand English soldiers sent to fall into his flank in Belgium, for he correctly estimated that if he succeeded in defeating Austria the English would be in the air without his striking at them at all. If, on the other hand, he was unsuccessful with Austria, his prestige and his military position would be completely ruined. It is well

known that Napoleon constantly taught the system of concentration, the system so powerfully imitated by the German generals in the Franco-Prussian War, and a system constantly sinned against in our own times for non-military considerations. Napoleon, who was both ruler and general, had the advantage of not permitting political considerations to warp his military judgement. That strategy was the most important feature of Napoleon's military genius is evident from the fact that he neither stimulated the invention of new arms, nor favoured the adoption of any new mechanical invention. The rifle of his soldiers was still the old rifle of Louis XVI., and so was the cannon. Fulton's immortal invention—first offered to Napoleon—found no favour with the Emperor. Napoleon clearly saw its possible value; but, as we now know, Fulton's steamship was then very primitive. Another still more striking proof is that Napoleon invariably held it to be his duty to arrive on the battlefield with more soldiers than his enemy. In fact, while he thought and in his military correspondence incessantly repeats, that a campaign ought if reasonably prepared ("*selon les règles de l'art*") never to be lost, he just as frequently insists on the precarious nature of a battle. Battles, he says, very frequently depend on some incident or misunderstanding, on general events that nobody can foresee. It is therefore safer, he adds, to trust to numbers. Yet he himself repeatedly beat his adversaries when he was in numerical inferiority—especially at Austerlitz in 1805, and at Dresden in 1813. As to the question whether Napoleon's luck must not be considered as a considerable element of his success, it can certainly not be denied

that like all great captains his was an astounding luck, yet until 1810, that is, until the time when he did not overrate himself, and had still contrived to stave off the European coalition against himself, we cannot but admit, especially after a study of his correspondence, that Napoleŏn's wonderful success was chiefly based on the wonderful care and genius with which he prepared it. Neither England nor any other country possessed a statesman or general equal to him. Pitt's greatness was in home matters, and he died in January, 1806. The greatness of the Austrian statesmen was neither at home nor abroad, and Prussia was governed by a beautiful, but politically insignificant queen, and a senseless, heavy king. The throne of Spain was disgraced by the most wretched of her numerous royal failures, and on the throne of Russia was a Czar who joined to the vanity of a fop, the cunning of a Tartar and the sentimentality of a false mystic. He was in nowise a match for Napoleon's statecraft or military genius. The stories according to which Alexander I. of Russia, or later on Prince Metternich, the Austrian statesman, duped Napoleon, are on a level with the well-known legend that Blücher, as the Prussians say, or the Duke of Wellington, as the English say, brought about the downfall of Napoleon.

Napoleon was duped and defeated by one man only: by himself. After 1810 he completely overrated himself, and persistently deceiving himself about the nature of tasks, the impossibility of which he was the first to point out (such as the Peninsular War and the Russian War), he finally roused the whole of Europe into a coalition: that is, he contrived to create a European union such as has never been known in

the whole of history, not in the time of Charles V., nor of Louis XIV.; and the end was—St. Helena.

In 1796 Napoleon married Josephine Beauharnais, a frivolous but exceedingly charming widow of thirty-three, who cared nothing for Napoleon, and probably never could understand him, but who was loved by the young general with the most passionate devotion, and had to her very end, in 1814, the most remarkable power over him.

Barras, one of the Directors, and a former lover of Josephine, procured Napoleon the position of general-in-chief of the Italian army, and so began the ever-memorable campaign of 1796. That campaign was only one of four attacks which the French in 1796 were planning against the English on the one hand, and against the House of Habsburg on the other.

The attack on England was to be by sea, *viâ* Ireland; the attack on Austria was to be carried out by two considerable armies, one under Jourdan, in the valley of the Main, the other by Moreau, in the valley of the Danube. Finally, Napoleon with a small army of from 30,000 to 40,000 men was to make what was then considered a diversion in Lombardy, where Austria still had the Milanese and other Italian dominions. Napoleon's campaign was at the beginning considered to be the least important of the great attacks planned by Carnot. In fact, the Directors consented to the Italian campaign mainly in hopes of seizing the rich towns of Lombardy, of extorting money and works of art, and other treasures. As a matter of fact, however, all their attacks on England by sea in 1796-97, as well as the campaigns of Jourdan and Moreau, quickly turned out to be failures;

so that the whole weight of the French attack on the Habsburgs came to rest on the shoulders of the young hero in Italy. He alone of all the generals sent by Carnot against England and Austria was completely successful. In less than a month he conquered the western half of Lombardy, and in a few more months the other half and the whole of central Italy, and in less than a year after crossing the Austrian Alps in Carinthia, Carniola, and Styria, he stood at a few miles from terror-stricken Vienna.

From his battles beginning in April, 1796, at Montenotte, Dego, Mondovi, when he successfully separated Beaulieu, the Austrian general, from Colli, the Sardinian commander, to his great battles for the reduction of the so-called "*quadrilateral*" (*i.e.*, the fortresses of Peschiera, Verona, Legnago and Mantua, all south of Lake Garda), in all these battles, he and some of his generals, especially Augier and Masséna, invariably practised the true principles of the *règles de l'art*, that is, concentration and placing oneself on the enemy's connections, so that the victories of Lonato and Castiglione, of Arcole and Rivoli, not only defeated the Austrian armies under Wurmser and Alvinczy respectively, but also secured for Napoleon the possession of the best, most formidable, and yet unconquered of the four fortresses, *i.e.*, Mantua. In February, 1797, Napoleon's rapid march on the Pope's little army as far as Tolentino, where the Pope made peace with the French, and his equally rapid march across the Austrian Alps to Leoben, were only in the nature of appendices to his great campaign in Lombardy. Nobody appreciated this campaign more profoundly than did Napoleon himself. He knew that he had not

only won a series of brilliant battles, and revealed the remarkable gifts of his generals, but he himself stood fully revealed to his own mind. What none of his contemporaries as yet saw, he alone grasped with absolute clearness, to wit, that his was the *rôle* of the final saviour of France; that his was to be the career of the modern Cromwell. He felt the value of each card he held, and mapping out his life carefully, he hastened to make peace with the Austrians at Campo Formio, with a view of returning to Paris at the earliest possible opportunity to occupy the position he was already determined to obtain. This accounts for the surprisingly lenient conditions he granted to the Austrians at Campo Formio. Austria obtained the territory of the Venetian Republic, including Dalmatia, and thus for the first time in her history she obtained a direct outlet on the Adriatic, instead of having had so far only a maritime outlet in Belgium, at that time the "Austrian Netherlands." Napoleon was prompted in his attitude also, by the motive of making Austria appear as a traitor to Germany. France obtained all the territory west of the Rhine, and the first act of the great Napoleonic drama was finished in scenes of unparalleled glorification, when Napoleon on returning to Paris was made the subject of an apotheosis by his enraptured fellow-citizens.

## V.

### NAPOLEON.—II

THE great victories of Napoleon acquired for him both the unbounded admiration of his people and the jealousy of the Directors. The latter motive was probably the strongest in the formation of the strange plan, in which Napoleon was to destroy British power through an invasion of Egypt and Syria. That the "Gift of the Nile," the country of the ancient Pharaohs was, and is, in many ways the centre of the political and commercial world, had long been acknowledged and seen. In the seventies of the seventeenth century the great philosopher Leibniz went to Paris to propose to Louis XIV. that the King of France should conquer Egypt instead of wasting his power in bootless invasions of Germany. Leibniz in a memoir well known to Napoleon expatiated, with the foresight of a great thinker, on the immense advantages accruing to France by the possession of Egypt, where, as he remarked, the two diagonals drawn through the three continents of Asia, Africa and Europe, are intersecting in their centre. Napoleon, for strategical and political reasons, was of the same opinion. It cannot, however, be denied, that into his Asiatic plans there entered largely a mystic element. He himself tells us

that when he trod on the historic soil of Egypt and Syria, where Sesostris, Alexander the Great, Caesar, the great French crusaders, and so many other heroes, had been doing great deeds, he felt himself in a sort of hypnotic state. Visions of things to come centuries after his death, yet possibly to be realized by him, were constantly flitting before his enchanted mind. So true is the old experience that men reprehend in others no fault with greater acrimony than the very defect from which they are suffering themselves. Napoleon constantly sneered at what he called "*les idéologues*," and he himself was the most remarkable specimen of that class of men of action hypnotized by a vague ideal.

However that may be, Napoleon started for Egypt, called at Malta, which he occupied, avoided Nelson and his fleet, who were chasing him all over the Mediterranean, and entered Egypt in July, 1798. Nelson finally did meet the French fleet on August 1st, 1798, and signally defeated it in the great battle of Aboukir Bay. However, that did not interfere with Napoleon's plans, and after a rapid campaign, by which he insured both the eastern side of Egypt, from Suez to the town of Kossir on the Red Sea, the complete delta of the Nile, and the Nile beyond Thebes (the latter by the ingenious and successful campaign conducted by Desaix), he at once commenced organizing the country. As he profoundly remarked, Egypt depending, as it does, entirely on the artificially regulated inundations of the Nile, is a country in which the Civil Service or centralized administration is of the utmost importance, and hence republican or decentralized institutions are unpractical. To complete his

success in Egypt he entered Syria along the coast of ancient Phoenicia; he failed before Acre, defended by Sir W. Sidney Smith and Phelippeaux, a French *émigré*; but beat the Turks on Mount Tabor. An outbreak of pestilence, however, forced him to come back to Egypt, and learning about the anarchical state in France, where the Directors had completely failed to keep the various contending parties in order, Napoleon resolved to return to Paris and to abandon his Egyptian plan.

In the year 1799 the French armies had at first been exceedingly unfortunate; the Powers, especially England, Russia and Austria, hoping to be able to cope with the French in the absence of their best general, invaded French territory, both in the north, where an Anglo-Russian army entered Holland, but was completely defeated by Brune at Bergen, not far from Alkmaar; in the centre, under Archduke Charles in Switzerland, where Masséna was at the head of the French armies; finally in Italy, where an Austro-Russian army under Suwarow was advancing through Lombardy, winning a series of victories over several French generals. The state of France, then, in summer, 1799, was exceedingly precarious. Had Suwarow been able to join the Archduke in Switzerland, the allies might have entered France proper and undone all the work of the previous campaigns. However Masséna beat, in the terrible battle of Zurich, the Austro-Russian army in Switzerland, and Suwarow, who had with brutal disregard for human life crossed the St. Gothard in order to join his allies in Switzerland, learning the result of Zurich, suddenly changed his mind and abandoned Switzerland altogether to

the French. However, Lombardy remained lost to the French, and Melas was in actual possession not only of the west of Lombardy, but was also trying to invade south-eastern France. The danger, therefore, largely averted by the victories of Brune and Masséna, was not yet totally removed.

Under these circumstances Lucien, the brother of Napoleon, and President of the Lower House of Representatives, made up his mind to put his brother into power. It is well known how the victor of so many battles on the day when Lucien's conspiracy was actually carried out, 18th of Brumaire, lost all presence of mind, repeatedly fainted and could scarcely recover, even when he learnt that his own soldiers by tyrannizing Parliament had made him practically the head of the State. The reader will remember a remark made in the previous lecture, that in natures like that of Napoleon, which are both excessively self-conscious and absolutely naïve, the ordinary physiological manifestations of emotions, such as trembling, fainting, crying, sobbing, are the regular accompaniments of the actions of a mind which otherwise seems to be devoid of any human frailty. Thus Napoleon cried like a child when one of the Venetian senators implored him not to abolish the old Republic, and he trembled like a child on the day when he was made First Consul. Once in power, he immediately recommenced the campaign in Italy, to recover all the territories which he had secured by his victories in 1796 and 1797. The campaign of Marengo in 1800 is, as far as Napoleon is concerned, a strategical victory, if, tactically speaking, not a glorious achievement. It is well known that in the battle of Marengo, near Alessandria, the French army

technically beaten by the Austrians under Melas, was saved by the sudden appearance of Desaix, who had been sent by Napoleon in a wrong direction southward towards Genoa, but who, on hearing the thunder of the cannon, at once took in the new situation, and unlike Grouchy in the identical position in the campaign of Waterloo, came up in time to renew the battle of Marengo, which he won, but in which he was killed.

Tactically, the result of Marengo is, therefore, due to Desaix, as the tactical failure of Waterloo is due to Grouchy. Strategically, however, Napoleon, by having placed himself on the communications of Melas, had won the battle before he had fought it. The result was the recovery of Lombardy by the French; and since Moreau in a campaign in Bavaria succeeded in completely defeating the Austrians at Hohenlinden a few months after Marengo, the Austrians were again forced to sue for peace, which was made in 1801 at Lunéville. From 1800 to 1803, then, Napoleon was not only at the head of the French State, but by his decisive victories had acquired for France such an absolute ascendency over all the other powers of the Continent, that in his ante-chamber one could meet all the princes of Germany asking for favours which he alone was able to give, although legally all those princes were under the power of the Holy Roman Empire.

Talleyrand, his great Foreign Minister, who took bribes and promises from all the parties, arranged for a recasting of the map of Germany, and already in 1803 the first of the two great processes by which the chequered area of Germany was reduced to simpler

aspects was inaugurated. That first process was the secularizing of the vast territories owned by sovereign Roman Catholic dignitaries, that is, bishops, archbishops, priors, etc. The second process, which happened in 1805 and 1806, was the mediatization of a great number of small sovereign territories in the power of imperial knights, counts and other smaller sovereigns. Both processes were formulated and executed at the hands of Napoleon and his agents. It is incontestable that just as Napoleon was the first to unite almost the whole of Italy (*i.e.*, Italian republics, principalities, kingdoms, and other small territories of still smaller sovereigns), even so it was Napoleon who rendered Bismarck's final triumph possible. When Napoleon first fought his Italian campaign, Germany consisted of nearly 1,000 small and petty principalities. When Napoleon was sent to St. Helena, little over forty principalities, kingdoms, etc., made up the whole of Germany. His historic vocation, in which he so fully believed, showed, therefore, with the utmost clearness, both in Italy and in Germany, and from that standpoint it is to be regretted that the Spaniards conceived such an unconquerable hatred against the man who alone of all the rulers and statesmen would have been able to electrify their dormant powers, and to give them a chance of recovering their ancient greatness.

If now we look at France, the great vocation of Napoleon, the abiding and immense work that he has done for the French, becomes evident in every department of French public or private life. In fact Napoleon is the creator of modern France, of her centralized institutions. Foreshadowed, anticipated, no doubt, by

the work of the Convention, it was fully articulated and legalized by the powerful organizing mind of the incomparable Corsican.

Napoleon placed the whole of the education of Frenchmen on the basis on which it has been proceeding to the present day. The college and university teaching, the division of scientific labour in the various high schools for technical and scholarly researches were all organized by him. He created and organized the Banque de France; he established the Légion d'Honneur; chiefly he codified the laws of France, which had hitherto consisted of an ungovernable mass of *coutumes* and royal ordinances defying all system and forming an encumbrance in every part of practical life. It would be the greatest possible mistake to assume that Napoleon's participation in that great work, in his *Code Civil*, *Code Criminel*, etc., was only one of the kind in which the Emperor Justinian or Frederick the Great participated in the making of the codes bearing their names. Napoleon assisted at nearly every meeting of the legislators and codifiers, and whole sections of his codes bear the direct impress of his mighty personality, of his deep insight into the realities of life. With characteristic sagacity he used to remark to M. Tronchet and the other jurists who aided him: "You only know the theoretic law, I know real life. I have fed and cared for thousands of men. I know not Man and Woman in the abstract, I know them in the concrete. I know the young and the old, the healthy and the ill, the widow and the married woman. I know the lawyer and the doctor, the clergyman and the artisan, and I mean to give to my nation a law that shall in its every part bear the impress

of realities." Nothing can be truer. Although Napoleon was deprived of all power in June, 1815, yet for nearly a century, *i.e.*, until the recent (1900) promulgation of the new code of civil law in Germany, a great number of German countries, such as Baden and the Rhenish provinces, long freed from the rule of Napoleon, preferred to keep his code as the embodiment of common-sense and justice; and one may fairly say that of white nations the majority have either completely accepted the code of Napoleon or have taken the chief inspiration and guiding principles from the study of that masterpiece of fairness and real insight into human relations.

It cannot be denied that Napoleon took a somewhat mechanical view of humanity, and in his attempt to regulate and formularize all the relations of the countries under his rule, he appears sometimes to have overstepped the limit of moderation. Yet as a matter of fact, France has, in spite of a frequent change of her *régime*, kept all the Napoleonic institutions—his regulation of the Church to the State, his system of education, his method of dealing with the great task of civil administration, his conception of the colonial system; and what is still stranger, most of the Continental states have conformed to the French model, so that with slight differences in local and minor matters, the political machine, as made by Napoleon, is now the political machine of nearly every Continental country. This immense and lasting work of Napoleon is frequently lost sight of. Nor need we wonder at that. People, as a rule, study history for its dramatic effects, and so they prefer to while and linger over the dramatic scenes of Austerlitz or the terrible defeats of Napoleon

at Leipzig and at Waterloo, rather than study the great reforms, the new political life, introduced by Napoleon. True, Napoleon was greatest probably as a military leader; however, one cannot forget that his ideas as to the regulation of modern states have long proved to be, on the whole, the only possible political system, so that the theories of the great encyclopaedists and other thinkers on practical politics have more or less given way to the ideas introduced by the greatest captain of modern times.

The prosperity of France from 1800 to 1812 was unexampled. Napoleon, who in 1802 had been made Consul for life, and in 1804, with practical unanimity, Emperor of the French, hated to levy too heavy taxes upon his people, and so procured money either by new wars, or, as in the case of Louisiana, by the sale of huge colonies. The industrial and commercial opportunities of the French were infinitely increased by Napoleon's commercial hostility to England, and the French actually hoped from 1800 to 1805 that their position as the leading nation of the world would for ever be placed on an unshakable basis, considering that they had just emerged from the most terrible revolution of all times, not only unscathed, not only as the victors over all their enemies, but also as the prudent organizers of their conquests and the subject of great sympathy on the part of most of their conquered enemies. The French mind, very much in contradiction to what in England and America it is held to be, is in reality most sober, matter-of-fact, and moderate. The French are not in the least as nervous as are the Americans, and, as a rule, less given to sudden changes than even the English. This may appear paradoxical

to the student of such phenomena in French life which the French themselves do not take seriously, such as the dealings or transactions in their parliaments or in their bestowal of popularity on a man whom nobody really takes seriously. But at the bottom of the French soul there is a fund of prudent moderation such as is natural in persons with whom the habits of the most rigorous thrift, and the most untiring energy and love of labour are the most usual and most carefully thought-out features. These remarks are necessary to explain how the French as a nation were, in 1805, not at all enchanted or over-enthusiastic about the great victories of Napoleon. It was the general opinion of the French that any new conquests outside France, which had then reached its natural boundaries, were superfluous, and it is a fact that even the astounding and marvellous victory of Austerlitz on the 2nd December, 1805, over Russia and Austria—a victory which for years to come completely nullified the greatest naval victory of modern times, Trafalgar (21st October, 1805)—was received in Paris with relative coldness. Both the common people and men of the shrewdness of Talleyrand, nay, Josephine herself, could not help remarking that even this splendid victory could scarcely lead to any new and valuable results except to complications, giving no doubt new opportunities for startling victories, but no guarantees of that peace and glory which the French rightly thought they had for ever secured, when in 1802 even England had considered it necessary to conclude peace with France at Amiens. This discrepancy between the feelings and wishes of the French nation and the policy of the Emperor is the most ominous phenomenon in his career. For while,

on the one hand, it is certain that Napoleon was brought to fall through his own abuse of his genius, yet on the other hand, one cannot help noticing that had the French warmly and sincerely clung to Napoleon, even in the time of his disasters from 1812 to 1815, as they had done one hundred years before to King Louis XIV during the terrible years of 1706-1711, Napoleon might have, with relative facility, overcome even the grandest of coalitions against him, that of 1814. It is customary in Germany to speak of Napoleon's downfall as being due to Blücher, Bülow, Gneisenau, and other Prussian leaders; in England, again, few, if any, ever seriously doubt that the Iron Duke brought Napoleon to his fall; while in Spain every honest patriot is convinced that Palafox, Castaños, and other great Spanish heroes were the ruin of the Emperor; let alone Russian generals and popular heroes, to whose deeds alone, every Russian holds, Napoleon's ruin must be traced. In reality, however, one nation alone, the French, has the doubtful glory of having brought to his knees the greatest of their captains and their statesmen, the greatest of modern men. Had they clung to him as they ought to have done, they would have spared themselves the terrible disasters which have befallen them ever since. Truly, it is no exaggeration to say that a nation that, twenty-seven years after the death of Napoleon the Great, was content to accept his nephew, a weak, mediocre and dreamy personage, and acknowledge him for over twenty-two years as their ruler; that nation ought in common-sense to have done everything to retain the great Napoleon at all costs as the only man who could promise and guarantee them power, honour and glory.

Twice in their history the French dealt by their greatest character and their greatest glory in the most inexcusable and unpardonable fashion. Jeanne d'Arc, who through her unique and incomparable personality roused France from the most ignominious lethargy, and in a few months rid a large portion of Central France from the foreigner who had held the French nation in subjection or terror for nearly fifteen years; Jeanne d'Arc was made a prisoner through one of the incidents of feudal warfare, and fell into the hands of the English, who put her in a dungeon at Rouen (1430). Jeanne d'Arc could have easily been liberated and again placed at the head of the French nation, which under her inspiring and ingenious leadership, considering the demoralization of the English and the vacillating policy of the Burgundian allies, would have undoubtedly reduced the rest of the great conflict called the Hundred Years' War, or the period from 1430 to 1453, to an affair of a few months, or in the worst case, of a year. The atrocious behaviour of French bishops and clergymen to the greatest of French women who has long been canonized by the public opinion of Europe, if not yet by the opinion of the Roman Curia, cost France twenty-two more horrible years of warfare in Normandy, Brittany, Poitou and Guienne, thousands of lives, millions of treasure, and the general devastation of the country.

It is no exaggeration to hold that the ingratitude and indifference of the French to their greatest character in modern times entailed upon them the same terrible consequences that followed in the wake of their unspeakably shameful neglect of the Saint of Domrémy. Like every nation, the French tried to

disguise their own fault by exaggerating the power of the English and other allies, just as the Americans, as we have seen in the first lecture, overdo the merits of Lafayette in order to save their own *amour propre*. It remains, alas, but too true that Napoleon's downfall was owing in the first place to his own faults; but of nations who contributed to his downfall the French are the guiltiest. At present, nearly a century after Waterloo, the sense of that historic ingratitude is slowly coming over the French nation, and for the last ten years there has been an astounding revival in the interest in Napoleon and his time. The French do not seem to ever get sufficient books and articles about the great conqueror, and every new book promising some new revelation, even of details or minor points, is received and read with avidity. It is said that when Louis Philippe, in February, 1848, wanted to accede as a last resort to the demands of the people, he was told the famous words, "*Trop tard, Sire.*" One may with equal justice now say to the French nation, with regard to their belated admiration for Napoleon, "*Messieurs, c'est trop tard.*"

The campaigns of 1805-6-7, just on account of their classical completeness and perfection, are, in spite of the bewildering details, simple and easily intelligible. When Napoleon learnt that the Austrians and the Russians were marching against him in the valley of the Danube, while he was apparently watching England from his camp at Boulogne, he suddenly hurled his whole army from the north of France across the Rhine to the Upper Danube. As already mentioned in another lecture, Napoleon's chief point was to prevent the Russians from joining the Austrians.

To that effect he directed the marches of his various columns in the minutest details, timing them for every hour of their march. He never doubted that the Austrians under General Mack, who was at Ulm, would expect him (Napoleon) to debouch from the Black Forest, that is, to make on Mack a frontal attack. For although Napoleon had in all his previous campaigns invariably given clear signs of his predilection for flanking movements, and of his constant anxiety to place himself on his enemy's communications, yet he rightly credited Mack with utter neglect of the elements of true strategy.

The French columns had rapidly converged on the Upper Danube, near Dillingen, long before Kutusow, the Russian general, had joined Mack, and a few battles fought by Napoleon's marshals against disconcerted Mack finished the circumvention of the Austrian general, so that he was forced to surrender with nearly his whole army at Ulm. It was then that the French troopers, seizing the great strategy of their Emperor, summed up the whole Ulm campaign in the famous remark, "Now the little Corporal [meaning Napoleon] makes us win his campaign by our legs." Napoleon, after that signal victory, at once advanced through the valley of the Danube on Vienna, which he entered; the allied Austrians and Russians had moved up to Moravia, whither they wanted to entice Napoleon, so as to crush him by one great victory, thousands of miles from his natural basis. However, Napoleon had carefully secured both his left flank in Bohemia, and his right flank on the Danube, so that even in the worst case he could have returned unmolested on his own communications. Instead of

being defeated, Napoleon won, on December 2nd, 1805, what was probably the most classical of his victories over the Austro-Russian army. In that battle, where he had very many less soldiers than the allies, Napoleon assumed a defensive attitude; he waited for the allies to attack him and hoped to avail himself of their blunders. Napoleon's army facing the east of Moravia was drawn up in three divisions, and according to his correct conception the allies ought to have attacked his left flank. However, they attacked first his right flank, and when he saw from a distance that the allies were moving on his right flank, he immediately grasped their profound strategic error and exclaimed "*Cette armée est à moi!*" For in the whole battle the great tactical and strategical idea was to drive the allies in the direction in which they could not but move further south to the frozen lakes of Satzau, while Napoleon's left flank was enveloping them in their rear, in their own left flank. The battle was formidable, but Napoleon's victory was complete. Alexander of Russia was dismayed, Francis of Austria sued for peace, and by the treaty of Pressburg Austria was completely deprived of a large part of her territory and was reduced to a third-rate Power. The position now obtained by Napoleon gave him the power to raise, as a counterpoise to Austria, some minor states of Germany to positions of higher dignity and power, and accordingly he made Bavaria and Saxony into kingdoms, endowing them with a great number of ecclesiastical and other territory, and thereby attaching them solidly to his own interest. This, together with the great territorial redistribution of Germany in 1805 (mentioned above), completed the disunion of the ancient Holy Roman

Empire, which in the next year, 1806, was formally declared extinct by the Emperor Francis himself. The immediate consequences, therefore, of the campaign of 1805 were the extinction of the Holy Roman Empire and the commencement of an entirely new Germany, the forerunner of modern Germany.

The next great campaign, against Prussia, occurred in 1806, in October. Prussia had so far abstained from all the military complications caused by the French Revolution and Napoleon, since the beginning of 1795, and had thereby committed the gravest blunder that any great state in Europe can possibly commit. It belongs to the elements of European policy ever since the Renaissance, that each great state must in turn take an active interest in all the great questions of Europe. Such as preach peace and non-intervention, preach in reality war and degradation. Europe can, from its very historic growth, never be turned into a peaceful United States. The peace kept by the citizens of the United States since 1865 in a territory almost as large as the whole of Europe is owing mainly to the very circumstance, to the very cause, of which in Europe there does not exist the faintest trace. That circumstance, that cause, is the marvellous uniformity and homogeneity of the American people. In Europe the differentiation of nations and peoples is, on the other hand, so far advanced; the individualization, the personal characters and traits of each little nation are so marked, so profound, so uncompromising, so irreconcilable, that peace, non-intervention, and all similar ideal dreams of rich bankers or multi-millionaires cannot possibly apply to Europe. Whenever in European history we study the period of a nation that has for

one motive or another kept peace, given up martial aggressiveness, in other words acted up to the advice of the modern millionaire philanthropists, we invariably find that nation come to grief and to ruin. Consider in modern times the dual Empire on the Danube, Austro-Hungary. Since 1866 she has carefully and most unwisely abstained from interfering with the wars of the French, the English, the Russians, etc., and has consequently suffered an abatement of prestige, and a loss of real power such as she has never suffered in the times of her greatest defeats under Napoleon.

This reflection literally applies to Prussia under Frederick William II. and Frederick William III. Having kept peace and abstained from any military interference from April 1795 to October 1806, that is, for nearly eleven years, during which time Europe was shaking with the most tremendous campaigns, waged from Cape St. Vincent to Copenhagen, and from the county of Kerry in Ireland to the desert shores of Syria, Prussia was now reaping the benefit of that peaceful abstention. While the French had, during all these wars, created an army of the highest order and developed the greatest of modern military captains; while the French people at large had received a political education such as neither themselves nor any other nation has ever obtained for the vast majority of its population; in Prussia the army was rotten, the officers and generals were rotten, the people were rotten.

For it is now well known that in October and November, 1806, Europe witnessed with amazement the terrible collapse of the Prussian monarchy and people, when in consequence of one double victory at Jena

and Auerstaedt on the same day, October 14th, 1806, the whole of the Prussian monarchy, with nearly all its fortresses (many of which surrendered on being summoned by a few French cavalry battalions) fell into the hands of the French, and Napoleon, a few days after the victory of Jena, entered Berlin. What stigmatized that collapse as one of unprecedented shame is that the Prussian nation, *quod dicitur*, not only did not manifest the slightest desire or intention of resisting the French, but in their moral degradation, actually and positively toadied to them, receiving the great conqueror with cheers when he entered Berlin. From the interesting memoirs of Thiébault we learn the most astounding details about the entire incapacity of the Prussians to comprehend the immensity of their disaster. Really, in thinking of the facility with which in times without railways and telegraphs, Napoleon was able to conquer Austria and Prussia and the whole of Germany in a few weeks, one cannot but admit that his vast dreams of a real world-empire do not, from the military standpoint, seem to have been unjustified. As we now know from the study of all his campaigns, the only serious and persistent resistance that Napoleon found in Europe previous to 1813, was on the part of the Spanish and Russians on land and the English on sea, so that both, the powers the most backward on land and the most advanced and richest nation on sea, formed the only serious obstacle to Napoleon's dreams of a world conqueror.

The campaign in 1807 waged in Poland and north-east Prussia ended, after great difficulties which Napoleon vainly attempts to disguise in his official despatches, with the hard-won victory of Friedland

(1807). During that campaign Napoleon had all the opportunities of studying and organizing the great problem of unfortunate Poland. The Poles themselves considered him as their liberator, and hoping as they did to undo through his might the three partitions of Poland (of 1772, 1793 and 1795), by which that once powerful republic had been parcelled out, and thus extinguished, they helped Napoleon in every possible way, finding food and soldiers for him; and one of their charming women, Madame de Walewska, for whom Napoleon had a very serious attachment, was used by the Poles as an instrument for the restoration of the whole monarchy at the hands of Napoleon. However, Napoleon would not grant them their chief dream, and only restored the independence of Poland as a duchy, united, as in the first half of the eighteenth century, with Saxony. It may be doubted whether Napoleon's Polish policy was not after all a greater blunder than his Spanish policy proved to be. It can scarcely be questioned that had he, by the restoration of independent Poland, attached to himself the interest, the enthusiasm, and the genius of that gifted nation, he would have had, whether against Russia or against Germany, an ally so useful, so efficient, as neither Saxony nor Bavaria could ever be. It is difficult to say what motives prompted Napoleon to create in west-central Germany a so-called Rhenish Confederation, and to omit creating a strong Poland in the east of Germany and under the very eyes of Russia. For rather than create that artificial Rhenish Confederation which had its roots neither in history nor in the soil, he ought to have consolidated a strongly-timbered Poland, and thus have had a very reliable basis

in the east of Europe, as he had one in the west (France) and in the south (Italy).

Instead of all that, Napoleon, after the victory of Friedland, practically proposed to Alexander a partition of the world, although nobody saw more clearly than Napoleon that there was no possible reliance in the cunning Russian Emperor, whose sentimentality and *esprit* were only the guise of an uncontrollable, false, hypocritical, and untrustworthy character. The treaty of Tilsit concluded by the two Emperors placed Napoleon for the next four years at the head of all the Powers. Even Prince Metternich, who now came to the fore, told his Austrian master with unfeigned frankness that Napoleon was invincible, that, far from any idea of combating him in the field, Austria's only policy was to win his favour.

In Prussia, on the other hand, whose beautiful, emotional and unpolitic queen, the mother of the late William I., had by her impetuousness precipitated the war of 1806, and had lived to see the deepest humiliation of her country, in Prussia there was no life left. Nothing can prove that more clearly than the fact that all the great men who now set to the work of restoring Prussia, her system of education, her army, her municipal organization, her industries, etc., were all non-Prussian. The most famous of them was Stein. He was joined by Hardenberg, by Blücher, Gneisenau, Scharnhorst. They all came from non-Prussian countries, and it is to their initiative and to their power of work that Prussia owes her restoration.

In the next year (1808) Napoleon, as if to show to the universe that at his feet lay defeated Europe,

assembled nearly all the foreign princes of Europe in a sort of congress which was held at Erfurt. To the great French actor Talma, who performed before the sovereigns, Napoleon had promised a "pit of kings." This was the heyday of Napoleon's life.

# VI

## NAPOLEON.—III

WE are now going to study the last period of Napoleon, the period from 1810 to 1815. With regard to that agitated time we have a superabundance of sources, nearly every general and statesman engaged in the military or political affairs of that period having left us memoirs, letters, or despatches. Nor have modern scholars been slow to avail themselves of the immense material. On the other hand, the contradictions between the sources are so flagrant, that on many a detail and with regard to many a great feature of politics, let alone greater features of the campaigns, we are still in the position of suspending our judgement, of hesitating to say the final word. In no struggle of modern times has the vanity and pride of nations and the deepest and finest susceptibilities of sovereigns been engaged, irritated, nay, outraged, so strongly as in the campaigns and diplomatic negotiations of Napoleon from 1810 to 1815.

Vanity, like any other quality of our heart, may take the most different kinds of forms. It may be disguised under the thin cloak of contempt, or become easily audible in the loud cries of indignation. It so happens that the pride and vanity of the English,

the pride and ambition of the Russians and Germans, have all been stung to the quick by the fruitlessness of all their efforts to bring to fall a man who had done them boundless harm, and had for over fifteen years disregarded their most sacred traditions and their deep-rooted conceit. Napoleon never disguised his contempt for the British army, he thought nothing of the German corps, and had scarcely a word of praise for the undeniable physical courage of the Russians. It cannot be denied that in 1810, when all his ambition had been crowned by the marriage with a Princess of the House of Habsburg, Napoleon conceived of the most unmeasured, disproportionate, and, in common-sense, absurd plans. This is meant not as a criticism of Napoleon, which the author is far from arrogating to himself. For even though we must admit that Napoleon's plans after 1810 appear to us—that is to common-sense or ordinary judgement—as plans impossible of execution, yet we must not for a moment forget that what appears absurd to us must, therefore, not be absurd when conceived and carried out by Napoleon. In the world of science great thinkers conceiving of ideas infinitely in advance of their time have been declared absurd, insane, or foolish; sometimes, as in the case of Descartes, a great thinker himself has declared that certain scientific attempts were doomed to hopeless failure. Yet even in the case of Descartes we see, that he who had discouraged any attempt at creating a calculus of the infinitesimal was quickly disproved by Leibniz and Newton, who, independently, both invented and established that calculus in the teeth of Descartes' predictions. Other examples in the history of science abound on every side. May it

not be so also in the realm of politics? May not the apparently absurd ideas of Napoleon, that is to say his Oriental plans, his idea to conquer the whole of Asia after having conquered Europe, may not this be one of those plans absurd to the ordinary man, yet capable of legitimate execution in the hands of a genius? *Quaeritur.* Instead, therefore, of condemning wholesale all the actions of Napoleon from 1810 to 1815 we might do better by suspending our judgement and restricting ourselves to the statement of the main facts, leaving our criticism for such parts of the narrative where criticism is probably possible.

It is now evident that from 1810 to 1812 Napoleon's power was implicitly and explicitly recognized as invincible all over the continent of Europe. From Metternich downwards, there was no serious statesman nor a general who honestly believed that Napoleon's military supremacy could be broken. After 1812, after the disaster in Russia, that all but universal belief in the invincibility of Napoleon began to fade away; in 1813, after the disaster of Leipzig, it ceased to exist, and in 1814 and 1815 it was turned into its opposite. These are the main points of the facts and opinions we are now to consider. There remains another point in which we cannot but offend the national and traditional feelings of a great nation, or at any rate of the majority of that nation, we mean the almost unanimous opinion in England that England saved Europe from Napoleon. That opinion, frequently accepted in books written by French authors too, has not the slightest possible basis in fact. In all the immense struggles between England and the French from 1793 to 1815, the English were able to secure

not a single decisive victory on land single-handed, and it was only on sea where in 1798 in Aboukir Bay, and in 1805 off Trafalgar, the English secured a decisive victory over the French and Spanish fleets. Nothing can alter these facts. The attempts of the English to drive out the French from Belgium in 1793-94-95 met with absolute failure and terminated in the hasty retreat of the British army under the Duke of York. Other attempts to land armies on French soil, such as in 1799 under Abercrombie, and in 1809 under the Earl of Chatham, met with absolute disaster. The British were unable to deprive the French of any one single victory, or of the conquests they made on the Continent from 1792 to 1812. It was only when the French army after twenty years' continuous fighting had been reduced in number, in force and in *morale*, that in the last battle Wellington, most decisively aided by the Prussians under Blücher, won a victory over Napoleon. The victories of Wellington in the Peninsular War have been described with all the exaggeration and "advertisement" natural in the case of smaller nations, who succeed in securing a victory over a greater nation. As the Scotch to the present day vaunt their victory of Bannockburn, ignoring Hallidon-Hill, Neville's Cross and other innumerable English victories over them, so the English then, in numbers very much smaller than the French, have by constant repetition so magnified the successes of Wellington in Spain, that the Peninsular War is, in the eyes of most British citizens, a British and nothing but a British success. The truth is of quite a different nature. It has been said that Spain was the grave of Napoleon: if that be so we must hasten to add that

the diggers of that grave were Spanish. Wellington's activity in Spain did not take up one-seventh of the country. It was practically limited in the first five years of the war to a territory bounded in the north by Oporto and Valladolid, in the south by a line from Lisbon to Algarve, and in the east a little outside the Portuguese frontier. In all the other six parts of the Peninsula the heroic Spanish people were maintaining a tremendous struggle against 200,000, sometimes 300,000, French regular troops under able French marshals, such as Suchet, Lannes, Soult and others. The campaigns, irregular and regular, waged by the Spanish against the French were incessant, accompanied by the utmost disregard for life, the wholesale devastation of the towns, and without that unparalleled resistance of the Spanish people Wellington, as he himself says in his despatch dated Cartaxo, 21st December, 1810, could not have seriously thought of driving the French out of the peninsula. With all due recognition for the prudence and general efficiency of Wellington (an efficiency seriously impaired by his absolute incapability of tolerating any talent or initiative on the part of his lieutenants), with all necessary recognition of the moral effects of his victory at Salamanca in 1812, one cannot but see that his former victories previous to 1812, that is, during the time when Napoleon's power was still unbroken, were all merely of a tactical nature and were strategically of no importance. Thus we see him in Spain in 1809 win, with the help of Cuesta, the battle of Talavera, but having misread the strategical position (*i.e.*, ignored the coming of Soult in his rear) he was forced to leave his wounded and baggage on the battlefield and again

retire into Portugal. The same movement of advance crowned by tactical victories and followed up by retreats into Portugal is to be noticed in 1810, when the advent of Masséna forced Wellington, in spite of a few tactical successes, to retreat behind the intrenchments of Torres Vedras. It was likewise in 1811, in spite of the victory of Albuera, most gloriously won by the soldiers of Beresford; nay, it was even so in 1812 after the victory of Salamanca, when Wellington was again forced to retreat into Portugal; so that in the first four years of his campaign, in spite of the heroic help, direct and indirect, given him by the Spanish nation, who occupied in other engagements the majority of the French army, Wellington was able to make no substantial headway compared with that of the decisive and rapid progress of Buonaparte in the few months from April 1796 to January 1797, when, as we have seen above, he not only won tactical but strategical victories, and moved his small army on one advancing line right into the heart of the Austrian Empire, aided little or nothing by the Italian people. Napoleon had been forced already in May, 1796, to suppress a revolt of the Italians in Pavia, and later on in Verona, where the French sick and wounded were massacred by the Italians.

And considering the Peninsular campaign in its main features only, and leaving out tactical details, for which the conflicting reports of the Spanish, the French and the English furnish no solid foundation, we are enabled to reduce it to the following short statement. Wellington's plan was to move on a straight line from Lisbon to Salamanca, to Valladolid, across the Pyrenees, and to enter France. The length of that

line amounts to from four to five weeks' marches. The net upshot of all his activity is that it took him six years to arrive at the other end of that line in France at Toulouse in April, 1814. He made no real headway on that line before 1813, that is, before the time that Napoleon's power had been broken at Leipzig, and Napoleon had been recalling most of his better troops from Spain. It was only when Napoleon's power had been completely crushed by the allies, that is, the Prussians, the Austrians, and the Russians in 1813 and 1814, that Wellington was able to enter France, only to learn that Napoleon had already been forced to abdicate.

Meanwhile the Spanish in the south-east and north-east of Spain had been carrying on a relentless guerilla war against the French, but had also failed to make any substantial military progress. It is therefore an exaggeration to say that the Peninsular War was the grave of Napoleon. The Peninsular War was, considering the vast dimensions of Napoleon's military power, to be considered in the light of a local upheaval, which certainly kept engaged parts of Napoleon's forces, but which could interfere with none of his essential military enterprises nor fatally counteract any of his plans. In fact, it was during the height of the Peninsular War that Napoleon undertook his most gigantic military enterprise, carrying over half a million soldiers into the heart of Russia. Napoleon himself was more annoyed than angry over the Peninsular War. True he would in the end not read the despatches from his generals, but on the whole he could not doubt, and was entitled to believe, that a decisive success in Russia would have automatically ended any further

attempt of the Spanish nation, as his decisive success in 1809 at Wagram automatically finished the fanatic resistance of the Tirolese people. In reality, therefore, the grave of Napoleon was dug neither by Wellington nor by the Spanish.

Whatever new details we may still learn about the events during the Peninsular War, the above strategic considerations can never be altered. Whether we consider the campaign of Gustavus Adolphus, who, with an army of his own of no more than 30,000 men was able to conquer Germany by a few decisive battles in less than eighteen months; or whether we consider the campaigns of Marlborough, who by one rapid march and a decisive victory in 1704, saved the German Empire from succumbing to an invasion of Frenchmen, Bavarians and Magyars; or whether we consider the campaigns of Frederick the Great, who in exactly one month defeated, and decisively too, the French and the Imperial army at Rosbach and the Austrians at Leuthen, from the 5th of November, 1757, to the 5th of December of the same year; even so, when we are seriously contemplating the campaigns of Napoleon, either in Italy or in far-off Egypt and Syria, let alone his campaigns in Austria or Prussia, we cannot, unless we yield to unthinking patriotism, contribute to Wellington any decisive action or any great generalship in the Peninsular War.

Another and very interesting question arises as to the attitude of the Spanish people to Napoleon. The Spanish king, in whose name they were fighting with such terrible resolution, was the most worthless creature that ever sat on the Spanish throne, and his son and heir-apparent was, if possible, more wretched still.

That alone is sufficient to stultify any historian in the attempt to comprehend the attitude of the Spanish. But when one considers that the royal family, for whom the Spanish were combating with such fanaticism, was purely French, were Bourbons, and that Napoleon was only offering them one Frenchman (his own brother) for another (Charles IV. of Spain), one utterly fails to understand the bitterness of a nation that had quite lately, in 1805, fought side by side with the French against their common enemy, the English. It seems certain that this attitude of the Spanish people is historically more important than either their *grand coup* in 1808, when Castanos succeeded in capturing at Baylen a French army of 24,000 regulars under Dupont (the greatest military achievement in the whole Peninsular War), or any other military attempt on their own part. For, on a little consideration we cannot but come to the conclusion that a nation sacrificing life, money, and all worldly estate in a desperate fight in the interests of an unworthy, cruel, and tyrannical royalty is thereby sealing her own fate. Other nations fought for liberty from the French yoke that had oppressed them for years; the Spanish nation fought before the French had had any opportunity of placing them under a yoke. The Spanish fought, instigated by their clergy, and when the war of liberation, as they erroneously called it, was ended in 1814, they found out that they had only played the game of the very powers that were most hostile to their own interests, and whom Napoleon wanted to remove. The Spanish had wasted all their moral and physical forces in an absurd fight against the principles of modern liberalism offered to them

by Napoleon, and thus lost all capacity or real desire for the modern system of liberal government. In other words it may be said, in the Peninsular War a grave indeed was dug, but it was not the grave of Napoleon, but the grave of the Spanish nation. The Spanish, once the most profound politicians, failed to see that they were, in this Peninsular War, only helping the English in a suicidal fashion, just as under William III. and Queen Anne the Dutch followed the suicidal policy of helping the English against the French; and as the Dutch have since sunk to a fifth-rate nation, so have the Spanish. It was in the well-understood interest of Spain not to oppose Napoleon; Spain could have only gained thereby, as did Bavaria, as did even Saxony and so many other States, which, by adopting the wiser policy of friendship with Napoleon survived even his downfall. However, there was no statesman able to see the true trend of events in Spain and between radical democrats and a reactionary clergy, the Spanish nation was falling back into its ancient slavery under Church and Crown. Probably Napoleon, who had in the highest degree that perfect equilibrium of mental capacities which is the highest form of common-sense, could not but assume that nations do, in the end, follow the dictates of common-sense, and that the Spanish would sooner or later see their folly in prolonging by the interested help of England, a war which meant desolation to Spain and subjection to the Spanish people. However, nations go by passions and not by common-sense. Even the circumstance that the Spanish colonies in America, utilizing the plight of the mother country, had actually risen in open revolt in 1810, and were certain to cut loose

from Spain, should Spain continue the unequal and murderous fight with Napoleon, even this all-decisive circumstance did not alter the absurd policy of the Spanish; while, on the other hand, it made the Peninsular War more than worth continuing for the English. England had always desired the liberation of the American Latin colonies. The Spanish therefore in that war dug the grave not only of their own civic liberties, but also of their colonial empire.

These are, we take it, the true proportions of the Peninsular War. The Spanish now begin to see it, but it is too late. It is one of the ironies of fate that an otherwise worthless individual, the Spanish minister Godoy, and the wretched king himself, by recommending the French alliance, proceeded, as a matter of fact, if not by noble intention, on the right lines of policy for Spain. The alternative was very simple. Was Napoleon able to continue his sway over Europe for good? If so, then Spain, by being allied with France or even under French suzerainty, could only win the prosperity that France enjoyed under Napoleon, and after Napoleon's death she could easily secure her political independence. A nation is certain to outlive an individual. On the other hand, was Napoleon to be brought to fall as came to be the case? Then Spain could choose her own road and her own government as she pleased. In either case she would have avoided the terrible Peninsular War that in the end served only the interest of the most obscurantist clergy in the world, and of Great Britain.

While Napoleon, in autumn, 1808, was entering Spain and chasing Moore before him, he, to his great surprise, learnt at Astorga, that a new coalition of

England and Austria had been made against him. His anger on learning the news was not feigned. He had defeated Austria so frequently since 1796; he had deprived her of so much of her territory, and had humiliated her so deeply, that he actually failed to see what interest Austria could have in commencing a new war, and what justification she had for any legitimate hopes of success. He was well aware that Austria was subsidized by England; on the other hand, he knew that the finances of Austria were in such a poor condition that even England could do very little for her. As a matter of fact the leading military authority in Austria, Archduke Charles, strongly advised his brother, the Emperor Francis, not to wage a new war, considering the total unpreparedness of Austria for war with the trained and victorious armies of Napoleon. Francis had always been obstinate, vain, conceited, and the ultimate success of his life seems *a posteriori* to confirm all the exaggerated notions that that limited mind had conceived of his own power and insight. There can be no greater contrast than that between Napoleon and Francis. Nearly of the same age, they differed in every other quality. Francis was just as small, petty, silly, as Napoleon was great, ingenious and creative; yet Francis spent the last twenty years of his life as the most powerful potentate in Europe, and Napoleon wasted the last six years of his life on a solitary rock in the Atlantic.

Napoleon did not hesitate to leave Spain and return against Austria with the firm intention of crippling Austria for ever. The campaign took place in 1809, and consists of three distinct sections: 1st, the cam-

paign in the valley of the Danube between Munich and Ratisbon; 2nd, the campaign of Aspern; and 3rd, the campaign of Wagram. In the first campaign Archduke Charles at first worsted the French generals, or, at any rate, came near defeating their purpose. However, Napoleon came up in time, and by one of those very rapid and bold movements that he had so successfully practised in all his former campaigns, he placed himself on the communications of Charles, worsted him in the battles of Eckmühl and Ratisbon, and forced him to retreat through Bohemia into Lower Austria. The second campaign was disastrous for the Emperor. As we now know, the Austrians had in the battle of Aspern (which lasted for three days) considerably more soldiers than Napoleon, and in spite of all the desperate heroism of Napoleon's men, Aspern was not definitely taken by them, and Napoleon was obliged to re-cross the Danube and make his headquarters on the isle of Lobau. By a stray bullet Napoleon's best friend and one of his greatest marshals, Lannes, was killed in this battle, and Napoleon seemed to be quite overcome by grief. The news of Aspern went like a thunderbolt through the whole of Europe. For the first time the invincible Emperor had met with a serious reverse, and all the various generals, every one of whom had in his pocket an infallible plan for securing the defeat of Napoleon, were now listened to with greater attention. The English having meanwhile sent an expedition of 40,000 men to the isle of Walcheren in Holland, so that the Emperor's flank was apparently in serious danger, the position of Napoleon seemed very precarious. However, Napoleon fully retrieved his reverse at Aspern by the

brilliant victory of Wagram a few weeks later. He had made his preparations for the battle with such profound foresight, that scarcely two hours after the commencement of the battle, he declared it virtually won by him, and, feeling fatigued, he lay down on a rug for a short sleep, amidst the roaring of over 1,200 cannon and 150,000 rifles. The battle was won by him, Archduke Charles was forced to retreat, and Austria was compelled to accept the very harsh conditions of the treaty of Schönbrunn, by which the territory and the population of Austria were very considerably reduced, so that Austria, like Prussia in 1806, was made a second-rate power, and Napoleon's ascendency over the rest of Continental Europe was more consolidated than ever. The Walcheren expedition, as is well-known, came quickly to grief by disease, and so missed entirely its point.

A study of the campaign of 1809, of the conduct of Austria and England, and of the minor powers, cannot but give us the impression that the wholesale condemnation of Napoleon as a man who had no regard for human life, and who pandered only to his own boundless ambition, cannot for a moment be upheld, in the face of the facts revealed by Austrian diplomacy in 1809, or, as we have seen, by Prussian policy in 1806. The truth is, that the sovereigns of Europe were unteachable, and just as greedy for new territory and just as reckless and unfeeling for the sufferings of their nation as Napoleon has ever been, or is said to have been. Even if we should admit that Napoleon's ambition exceeded legitimate bounds, we cannot but notice that his unprecedented genius entitled him to hopes and ambitions far beyond what a Francis II.

or a Frederick William III. of Prussia could reasonably claim; and if the conduct of Napoleon in 1808 and 1809 is reprehensible, the conduct of England and Austria is undoubtedly more reprehensible still. England, to satiate her jealousy and hatred of Napoleon, whom for so many years she was unable to touch, in spite of her very greatest efforts—England encouraged the Spanish to bleed themselves to death in a hopeless, bootless, and objectless war against Napoleon. In the same way the Emperor of Austria caused the heroic Tirolese, in 1809, and the other numerous nations of his realm, to bleed themselves to death in a war which he had recklessly provoked, against the opinion of the best military judgement of his country, and without any serious hope of making good the losses he had sustained in 1805.

A new man came now to be the first minister of Austria—Prince Metternich, one of the strangest, most interesting, and for a long time most important, historical figures of European history. His was the power of being interesting and important during his lifetime, but, like a sterile beauty, his power left no inheritance, and he has long ceased to count as a great historical factor. Like the great actor he was, he instinctively felt that posterity would wind no wreaths for him, and that his heyday and triumph depended on passing circumstances of his own life. His vanity was greater than his genius; he certainly had very much diplomatic dexterity; he knew the persons and the causes of his time from personal and extensive knowledge; he was attractive, charming, instructive. In 1809 he counselled Francis what Francis ought to have done after 1802, that is, friendship with Napo-

leon. The marriage between Napoleon and Marie Louise, the daughter of Francis, was chiefly Metternich's work.

It is, one cannot help remarking, a very strange coincidence that, as the West Indies have given to the French Crown two of her most charming and most important royal spouses (Madame de Maintenon had spent the best years of her first youth in the West Indies, and Napoleon's first wife, Josephine, was of West Indian origin), so, on the other hand, Austria had ever since the fated marriage of Marie Antoinette with Louis XVI., and, in fact, ever since the coalition with Austria, made by Kaunitz in 1756, brought nothing but disaster to the French. Napoleon, who like all Southern people, entertained a belief in lucky and unlucky persons, had always thought Josephine was his Mascotte, and strange to say, a few years after he divorced Josephine, his luck deserted him completely. It is equally true that the entrance of another Habsburg princess into the ruling house of France brought upon Napoleon nothing but shame and disaster. Marie Louise was the most flippant, the most sensual, and morally the weakest woman of her time. When Napoleon was still in Elba, in 1814, as the prisoner of Europe, and while she was already mother of a son by Napoleon, she abandoned herself to a one-eyed, wizened and wasted *roué*, forgetting both her origin and her duty. Metternich himself had a belief in lucky and unlucky persons, and it is not unreasonable to assume that he urged the negotiations regarding the marriage of Napoleon with Marie Louise with some mystic belief in the disaster to be produced by the connection of Napoleon with the House of Austria.

For, as now everybody knows, the House of Austria is, of all the reigning houses in the world, the one that has been visited, to our own times, with the greatest number of most shocking disasters, just as in the eighteenth century the Habsburgs brought nothing but ill-luck to either the Bourbons or Napoleon.

Napoleon himself, when he learnt of the birth of his son, seemed to be at the height of glory and happiness. Now that his dynasty was assured he seemed to know no bounds in his ambitions, in his dreams. It is here where, as we said before, the serious student of history must pause and hesitate for a long time before venturing on a judgement of an historic personality that, like the great founders of religion, is so unique, so complicated, that we have in reality no measure to comprehend it. It is well known in ordinary life that nothing is easier than to misconstrue any character that exceeds normal mediocrity; in the case of Napoleon we have a character exceeding the general and exceptional run of mankind to an unprecedented extent. This very circumstance must necessarily entail a lessened probability of sound judgement on him. It appears that Napoleon, after the birth of his child, had definitely made up his mind to conquer Russia and to start on the realization of his oriental plans. As he himself remarked, in all his actions he was prompted by some inner voice or vocation, not unlike to that Daemon to which Socrates ascribed his ideas and the motives of most of his actions. It has been reserved for a professor of ancient history in Berlin to illuminate the history of Socrates by the declaration that Socrates' Daemon is only tantamount to the habit of some people of counting

the buttons on their coats in order to get a negative or a positive answer in moments of wavering resolution. Should Professor Edward Meyer, in the course of time reach the period of Napoleon, we shall no doubt learn that Napoleon's inner voices (let alone those of Jeanne d'Arc) were only like a game of toss-up played by boys for a piece of cake. However, it may be submitted that in history, especially in that part of it that happens outside the dusty library of a scholar, there are such voices, there are such inward callings given to men like Columbus, Richelieu, Napoleon, Bismarck, or to women like Jeanne d'Arc. It consists in the absolute, the irresistible conviction that they are to do some great thing for humanity, and accordingly they do it. They are unable to analyse those voices, to formulate them scientifically, or to give any reasonable account of them—what they know is that the voices are there, that they actuate, prompt, urge and force them to do what in the end they do achieve. It was a feeling of that vocation, a vocation that we may now call the task of spreading all over Europe the ideas and principles of the French Revolution, such as that of equality before the law, the abolition of feudal *régimes*, the abolition of castes, etc., that probably prompted Napoleon, *malgré lui*, to undertake the Russian campaign, which, on strictly military principles, nobody could have condemned more than he did himself. Let us consider the chief facts from the military standpoint. Napoleon knew that all the principles of strategy which, in innumerable despatches and conversations, he had inculcated upon his generals, unremittingly required from them, and for the neglect of which he had

frequently severely punished them—these very principles Napoleon consciously violated in going to Russia. These were the principle of concentration, the principle of the nearness of the basis, the principle that the enemy can be brought to surrender only when you can place yourself on his communications (a principle practically unrealisable in Russia); all these principles Napoleon consciously violated by entering on his Russian campaign in 1812.

If we now consider the political and economic aspect of the question, we come to the same conclusion. To put it plainly, Russia was then not worth having; it was unable to feed the huge army of Napoleon; it had none of the treasure that Napoleon found in Lombardy in 1796 and 1797; it offered no advantage whatever in point of industry or commerce or even agriculture. Even nowadays it is economically very backward, and it will take generations and generations before Russia can be made an object of prey as valuable as was Italy or Germany even in Napoleon's time. If we consider finally the oriental plans of Napoleon, there was scarcely anything to gain from a conquest of Russia as she then was, for Russia had scarcely reached the Caucasus, and the defeat of Alexander gave Napoleon no footing whatever in Asia Minor or the Caucasus. Had Napoleon in 1812, instead of defeating Alexander, attempted to destroy the Turkish Empire, he might have made some substantial progress, considering that the British fleet was more and more engaged in America. The destruction of the Turkish Empire had long been in his mind, and his instructions to Marmont in 1809, who was governor of the Illyrian provinces,

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close to Turkey, were evidently given with the view of a near campaign against Turkey.

All these and other minor considerations, not one of which was alien to Napoleon, rendered the campaign in Russia a superfluous, useless, uninteresting enterprise. Napoleon had learnt that even Austria, after repeated signal defeats at his hands, found means of rising against him in 1805 and 1809 for the third and fourth time. How could he reasonably suppose that even a defeated Russia would not imitate Austria at least another two or three times, trying to shake off the yoke of the French Emperor?

These and similar arguments were put before Napoleon after he had arrived with his huge army at Kowno, and Napoleon seemed to be deeply impressed by them, for he said to Berthier, the chief of his military cabinet, that he would give up the campaign and return west. The joy in the army was universal. However, the next day the order came to march eastward to Russia, and when Berthier asked the Emperor to what motives he had ceded in the sudden change of yesterday's resolution, the Emperor looked dreamily into the air and said, "*Je ne sais pas.*" And so the immense army, the largest that had up to that time ever been collected in Europe, went on to the steppes of Russia, the left wing of Napoleon being led by Macdonald, his right wing by Prince Schwarzenberg, and the centre by Napoleon himself. The Russians retreated before him; in all the smaller engagements the French were victorious, but in the battle of the Moskowa (also called Borodino) the Russians, under Kutusow, offered the most frightful resistance. The battle (Sept. 7th) lasted from five o'clock in the morning till late at night. Kutusow

spent the night in his own camp and only retreated the next day; in other words, Napoleon's victory in that famous battle was only technical but not strategical; he had not annihilated the Russian army, and Alexander was therefore not forced to surrender to him. Napoleon entered Moscow, and even his oldest veterans were, it appears, in a state of ecstasy at the sight of that immense and—for all the Slavs and many of the Orientals—sacred town, which in Russia and north-eastern Asia is largely considered to be what Mekka is in south-western Asia. Napoleon spent several weeks at Moscow waiting for Alexander's surrender; however, Alexander did not surrender. The desperate Russians set fire to the town, Napoleon was forced to retreat, and now followed that horrible disaster, the greatest in modern times, when the French army, harassed by the Cossacks, emaciated by cold and famine, died in their thousands every day, so that the famous disaster or catastrophe on the Berezina is only one amongst many, and when the Grande Armée reached the western confines of Russia, it had melted down to a few thousand men. A thrill of horror went through the whole of Europe; most people saw in the terrible disaster the finger of God, who punished an over-ambitious titan, and many of Napoleon's friends began to despair of him.

## VII

### NAPOLEON.—IV

THE sovereigns of Europe had no sooner learnt of the great disaster in Russia than they prepared to make a new coalition against Napoleon in order to bring about his final downfall. If one reads their proclamations one would be induced to think that their only intention was the general welfare of Europe, which they said was seriously jeopardized by the boundless ambition of the French Emperor. However, like all political manifestoes, the proclamations of the sovereigns were on the whole mere pretexts to cover their real intentions, to disguise from the glance of the mistaken nations of Europe the fact which, a few months after Napoleon's downfall was to be manifest to the dullest of European citizens, but which in 1813, 1814 and 1815 neither the enthusiastic poets nor the learned professors were able to foresee. That fact was that the sovereigns in reality only meant to place the whole of Europe under a bondage far more objectionable, far more injurious to all the higher interests of Europe, far more reactionary than anything that Napoleon had ever contemplated doing. It is now well known that for over thirty-five years after Napoleon's downfall the whole of Europe was

kept under a *régime* of the most abominable reaction; that the slightest tendency on the part of the people to establish any of the more liberal institutions or even to indulge in a discussion of liberal reforms, was ruthlessly stifled and blotted out at the hands of the very self-same governments who in 1813, 1814 and 1815, in the name of the liberties of Europe had led millions of European citizens against Napoleon.

The cold truth is that the sovereigns were, in 1813, even more afraid of the new spirit that had come over their own subjects than of Napoleon. The coalition of 1813 was really pointed against the very people that it was meant to "liberate" from the yoke of Napoleon. The sovereigns knew the new spirit created by the French Revolution was directly opposed to all their personal interests, that just as France could never again become what she had been under the old kings, even so the days of the absolutistic kings in Prussia, Germany, Austria, were destined to come to an end unless the sovereigns by an extreme effort succeeded in screwing back the tide of history.

This alone will explain the fact that in 1813 was realized what had never been realized before in Europe, that is, a complete union and coalition of all the sovereigns against one power. At various times in European history there had arisen a powerful ruler whose ambition was threatening to most of the other sovereigns; such was the case with Charles V., with Louis XIV., and great coalitions were made against them; however those coalitions were never literally complete, and both Charles V. and Louis XIV. easily contrived to secure allies of their own and thus to break up the coalition. It was in 1813, and then

alone, that practically and literally every single Christian country of Europe outside France united with the rest in one huge coalition against Napoleon. With the solitary exception of little Saxony every one ruler in Europe joined Prussia, Russia, Austria, England, Sweden, etc., to combat Napoleon.

If one pauses to think of the most essential and most patent character of Europe, that is its irreconcilable differentiation (even now into forty odd sovereign and different states); if one considers that the interests of various powers in Europe are as a rule, and must for ever be so conflicting, so diametrically opposed to one another as they have always proved themselves to be, so that a United States of Europe is as impossible as is an hereditary monarchy in the States of America: one cannot but stand amazed at the fact that for once in European history the Powers, forgetting their conflicting interests, overlooking their irreconcilable differences, united into one immense coalition animated by one purpose, meant to do one single great historic fact. This, on the one hand, undoubtedly sheds unparalleled lustre on the greatness of Napoleon, and it is evident that nothing short of a man of Napoleon's grandeur could have ever terrorized the European sovereigns into a union and coalition into which no pressure of events had ever been able to weld them before Napoleon.

As was said in a former chapter, it was Napoleon who over-reached himself, it was the French who deprived him of his French throne, but it was the united might of Europe that deprived him of his ascendency and power in the countries outside France. Had he moderated himself after 1810, he might have un-

doubtedly died the Emperor of the French, even if he had abandoned his conquests east of the Rhine river. Had the French faithfully clung to him as they had clung to Louis XIV., he might have died Emperor of a diminished France but still a French sovereign. It was the union of Europe that deprived him of his empire outside France, and finally brought him by the desertion of the French to his last plight.

In studying the coalition of 1813, one cannot overlook that even then the interests of many sovereigns united against Napoleon were such as could be better advanced by alliance with the great French Emperor. Even Austria had perhaps stronger reasons to side with Napoleon than to join the mighty coalition against him; Napoleon himself knew that, and he could never fully believe in the possibility of a general coalition against him. Austria was more than threatened by Napoleon, but Napoleon's rule was after all a question of a man's life. The permanent antagonism to Austria was to be found not in the ruler of France but in Prussia. Had Austria followed her true political interests in 1813 she could have, by the aid of Napoleon, secured a position of infinitely greater supremacy in Germany, or of stronger consolidation in her own hereditary provinces. She had very little or nothing to gain from the downfall of Napoleon: Prince Metternich, however, was governed by one passion only and that passion was vanity. He saw that in the circumstances of the year 1813 his was the easy possibility of acquiring the glory of having defeated Napoleon diplomatically, provided that he, Metternich, identified himself with the interests of Prussia and Russia. Austria's interests were evidently

rather in favour of an alliance with Napoleon and the decisive role in the diplomatic negotiations fell naturally to Metternich, but Metternich, pursuing not the real interests of Austria, which was only his adopted country, but the promptings of his own boundless vanity, identified himself with Prussia and Russia and claimed to have brought Napoleon diplomatically to his downfall. The Czar of Russia pursued a far better policy: he, too, was prompted by the desire of revenging himself on Napoleon, of entering Napoleon's capital in triumph as Napoleon had entered his. But beneath this wild and blind desire for vengeance there was in Alexander a deep and cunning scheme in perfect harmony with the true interests of Russia, so that while Metternich was more adroit, a better negotiator, and subtler diplomatist, Alexander was both more cunning and more diplomatic, for Alexander contemplated entering Paris and defeating Napoleon completely, not only to have his vengeance for Napoleon's compaign in Russia and Napoleon's frequent victories over Russian armies, but also and chiefly to secure the role of the saviour of France, to attach the bulk of the French nation to the Czar of Russia, to restore France to her position as a great power in Europe and thereby to acquire an additional and powerful leverage in the complicated game of European politics. More particularly the Czar wanted to secure the French alliance in order to have a free hand in his oriental plans with regard to which England and Austria, he very well knew, were his natural antagonists.

The campaigns of the Czar in 1813 and 1814 were therefore based on natural sentiment and on justified

principles of policy. The negotiations and the whole policy of Metternich, on the other hand, were based on personal vanity and had no historic basis in the past, and were therefore unable to lay down solid foundations for the future.

The most solid, most consistent policy amongst the sovereigns was in 1813 adopted by Prussia. From her terrible downfall of 1806 onward, Prussia had constantly contemplated (or rather imported foreign statesmen were contemplating for Prussia) the restoration of the whole monarchy and the reparation of the immense loss in prestige and power which the unprecedented collapse of 1806 had entailed upon her. Accordingly Prussia was determined to join the alliance against Napoleon, to throw herself body and soul into the new struggle against the man who had humiliated her beyond all expression. In that struggle Prussia might lose everything, and then she would have been blotted out from existence, or she might gain a rehabilitation, without which her power in Europe was impossible. It was therefore to Prussia a struggle for life or death; for that reason alone Austria ought not to have joined the alliance against Napoleon. The enmity between Prussia and Austria was historical and natural, it was the bounden duty of Austrian statesmen to help Prussia under no circumstances. However, the Austrian Emperor was too incapable to see the right bearings of politics, and Metternich was too vain, and so the policy of Prussia instead of being counteracted by Austria, and thus utterly defeated by Napoleon, was helped on all sides, and it was really from 1813 to 1815 that Prussia laid the foundations of her present greatness.

England, although she promised help to the allies, and sent them subsidies in the shape of money, was partly engaged in Spain, partly in the United States, with which, chiefly through the subtle manœuvres of Napoleon, England had been at war since 1812; the immense campaigns therefore in 1813 and 1814, in which the military power of Napoleon was completely broken, were carried on without any participation of the English, except in the Basque corners of Spain and France.

These diplomatic considerations were necessary before entering on a short description of the campaigns of 1813 and 1814, in both of which the military genius of Napoleon shows with the greatest splendour, but in both of which he was finally worsted owing to superior numbers on the part of his antagonists, and to the treachery of his subordinates, more especially of the commander of Soissons. It would be indeed an untruth to say that in 1813 the allies (the Prussians, the Russians, the Austrians, the Swedes, and countless smaller sovereigns) had always the absolute superiority in numbers; as a matter of fact Napoleon had, in addition to his army in 1813, such an enormous number of soldiers, horses, artillery, and other ammunition of war disseminated in his various strongholds and fortresses between the Rhine and the Elbe rivers, that had he united all his forces, both the garrisoned and the non-garrisoned, he could have for a long time disposed of superior armies in the field. For reasons, however, that can be put down to nothing but obstinacy or some other mysterious motive that escapes us, Napoleon, instead of availing himself of the vast number of soldiers garrisoned in his German fortresses, absolutely

refused to draw upon them, and so quickly came into a position of numerical inferiority.

It appears that Napoleon was convinced that the coalition would soon break up, that Austria or the minor German powers would again rally round him, and that he might therefore still continue to hold his own in Germany without drawing upon his numerous garrisons in German fortresses, so that we may say that Napoleon's military error in 1813 was caused by his false judgement of the diplomatic situation. The campaign itself, like all Napoleonic campaigns, is simple, and can be reduced to a few words. Napoleon having to deal with Sweden and Prussia on his left, with Prussia and Russia in front of him, and Russia and Austria at his right flank, naturally chose, as he had always done, a central position, where he might be enabled to prevent his antagonists from joining, and so crush them by superiority of numbers. His movements were so rapid, that when in May, 1813, he arrived from France in the neighbourhood of Leipzig, which was really the central position then as well as in the times of Gustavus Adolphus, in 1631, the allies had not yet joined, and had not yet been able to combine their forces. From Leipzig Napoleon advanced to Dresden. The King of Saxony, his faithful, if at times vacillating, ally, and the whole of the Elbe River in his possession, seemed to give him a military leverage great enough to combat his ever increasing opponents. As a matter of fact, advancing eastward of Dresden, Napoleon beat Blücher repeatedly. Likewise, Napoleon marching southwards of Dresden defeated the Austrians most signally. However, Napoleon's left flank, commanded by Ney and Oudinot, met with a serious reverse at the

hands of the Prussian general, Bülow, in the battle of Dennewitz, so that Napoleon's left flank remained practically undefended. One of the chief deficiencies of Napoleon's army in 1813 was his lack of cavalry, which prevented Napoleon from following up his victories, so that Blücher, in spite of repeated defeats at the hands of Napoleon, was always able to rally and to advance again; the greatest defect however was, as already mentioned, Napoleon's obstinate refusal to call upon his reserves in his German fortresses.

The peace negotiations made during that campaign, by which Napoleon hoped to retrieve his position diplomatically, proved to be a failure; Metternich—whom Napoleon tried in turn to flatter, to intimidate, to brow-beat and to persuade—Metternich only listened to his own personal vanity, and glorying in the position of the central diplomatist of the time, he listened neither to the interests of Austria, which he represented, nor to the arguments of Napoleon, which, as history has long proved, contained a very solid amount of truth. It is said that in those negotiations Napoleon uttered, amongst other phrases meant to intimidate Metternich, the terrible words, "What are a million lives to me?" It is customary to quote that as a proof of Napoleon's diabolical nature. In reality, it was a mere phrase. When Napoleon, after Waterloo, was offered the help of the anarchic element of France, he calmly refused it.

As a matter of fact, Napoleon was not at all cruel, and he used such phrases as mere political devices to make a point in negotiations; he thought, and with great justice, that many of the members of the coalition ought, on maturer consideration, to come to the

conclusion that their real interests were bound up rather with him than with the coalition. It was certainly the case with Bavaria, with Saxony, with Würtemberg, with Italy, and, as we have seen, Austria. However, the vanity of the princes, their desire to stop the revolutionary spirit and the power and influence of Metternich and Alexander, undid what with regard to Napoleon's profound remark, ought to have been the right policy of several of the sovereigns; and all the negotiations failing, Napoleon was forced to stake his fortune on a gigantic battle which took place near Leipzig on three consecutive days in October, 1813. That battle, called the Battle of the Nations, in which the French army was confronted by the army of the allies, twice as numerous, ended in the defeat of Napoleon's army. Napoleon retreated into France, was on his way attacked at Hanau by a Bavarian army which he completely crushed, and the allies now decided to enter France and put a final stop to the rule of the great conqueror.

The campaign of 1814, fought between the Seine river and its right-hand affluents, is at once one of the most interesting military exploits of Napoleon, and one of the least important of his campaigns. Napoleon, placing himself in the middle of the allies, succeeded, by rapid movements in defeating several of their generals in pitched battles. A study of those movements, the manner in which Napoleon utilized a relatively small army against enemies possessing a crushing superiority of numbers, has always been considered one of the great feats of modern warfare. However, circumstances, the whole political horizon, and the diplomatic conjuncture, had

changed so profoundly, that victories which in 1796 or 1800 would have secured Napoleon's final triumph over his enemies, were in 1814 brilliant but barren successes. The student of military history can indeed never tire of studying those famous campaigns in which Napoleon's military genius, in the opinion of most authorities, shows even to a higher extent than in his former campaigns. As a matter of history, on the other hand, Napoleon's victories of Brienne, Montmirail, Craonne, Reims, St. Dizier, are of very little importance. For the allies had now learnt the great lesson, that Napoleon was definitely deserted by the French nation; accordingly, the allies could afford to ignore him and his small army, since even then they were unable to crush him by a great military victory.

In studying the marches of the allies, it is easy to note that the Austrians under Prince Schwarzenberg took a very southern route, evidently with the intention of giving Napoleon time either to make a very great success or to negotiate with Austria as against the other allies. In 1814, indeed, Austria had somewhat convinced herself, that her interest was not to abet the allies under all circumstances, and what Napoleon's diplomatic persuasion or power of intimidation had failed to do in 1813, the force of circumstances had succeeded in bringing home to the Austrians in 1814. But it was too late; the allies after indulging in sham negotiations at Châtillon-sur-Seine, clearly saw that Napoleon's power of aggression, as well as his great force of resistance on merely defensive lines, was over. They therefore determined to march on Paris, ignoring the presence of Napoleon at the head of 40,000 or 50,000 men at Fontainebleau. In that, they were per-

fectly justified by the attitude of the French nation. Even then, it is true, Napoleon could count on the sympathies and the profound loyalty of large sections of the French nation; however a very powerful section of the rich *bourgeoisie* and the nobility had made up their minds to desert him. There was, both in the south of France, where Wellington had advanced as far as Toulouse, and in the north-east of France, where the allies were concentrating ever increasing hundreds of thousands of soldiers, much to intimidate, to frighten, and to discourage the population of France. Moreover, in the Parliament of France, both Talleyrand and Fouché were manœuvring and intriguing against the Emperor. The strongest of all arguments, no doubt, was the fact that France had, ever since 1792, seen no foreign power within her precincts, and that the spectre of war in France acted upon the *bourgeoisie* (the middle classes) with a power so great that even the prestige of Napoleon was unable to counteract it.

To the observant student of French history it is quite evident that France (in that so similar to the physical structure of the country) consists of two diametrically opposed elements: one the steady, slow, methodic, and even pedantic, *bourgeoisie* proper, whose ideal is order, quiet, work, and present enjoyment of life; the other, consisting of volcanic forces ever tending to upheavals, revolutions, political and social eruptions, instinct with boundless ambitions, and threatening the existence of old institutions. It so happened that in 1814, the former, that is the *bourgeoisie* element was in the ascendency; to this Napoleon was forced to succumb, although in his re-

latively long reign, from 1802 to 1814, he had exhausted the vast resources of his mind to devise measures and institutions by which huge classes and sections of France were to be solidly attached to him and to his dynasty; yet he was unable to do it. What the slowest and most narrow-minded of the Bourbon or Valois monarchs had been able to do, that the greatest of French rulers proved incapable of achieving. The French, as a nation, never revolted from sovereigns as insignificant as Henry II. or Louis XV., but they gladly, or at least with apparent lightness of mind, deserted Napoleon I. The allies saw that, and on entering Paris they knew that Paris, that is the majority of the Parisians, would gladly accept anything reasonable the allies meant to offer them, and would turn their backs on Napoleon.

Napoleon was forced to abdicate; he did so on behalf of his son. The allies, however, never meant Napoleon's son to ascend the throne of France, and the brother of Louis XVI., under the name of Louis XVIII. was put on the throne of France. Napoleon himself, under a strong escort, was permitted to live in the Isle of Elba, between Corsica and Italy, although even at that time Prince Metternich proposed that the great conqueror, in order to be efficiently shelved, ought to be sent to St. Helena. So ends the second period of Napoleon, and we see the mighty conqueror reduced to a trivial sovereignty in a small and insignificant island, deprived of all his influence, destined to pass the rest of his life in poverty. It is at this moment that we must consider the conduct and behaviour of most of the persons surrounding Napoleon: of his marshals, of his wife, of his servants,

of his opponents, in order to obtain the right standard, the right measure with which to judge the political as well as the moral value of that extraordinary man, With exceedingly few exceptions, such as Macdonald, one of his marshals, every one of the men whom he had raised, frequently from the dust to social heights which they could have never seriously hoped to realize, behaved to Napoleon with all the vile ingratitude of valets and flunkeys; in speeches they reviled him, in actions they insulted him. True, that all their ingratitude and degrading baseness of conduct is like mere child's play if compared to the conduct of that Habsburg princess who had the great honour of being his wife: she not only did not seriously want to join him, which she, moreover, was forbidden to do, but she forgot both her religious oaths and conjugal faithfulness to him, and threw herself away upon a miserable Austrian soldier, who was to Napoleon what an insect is to an eagle. Ney, Soult, and all the other marshals and generals vied with one another in insulting the great emperor, and taking the oaths of fealty to the Bourbon who again sat on the throne of the French kingdom. Louis XVIII. was a heavy, limited, stupid, and uninteresting person; none of the current phrases in history has more truth in it than the famous saying about the Bourbons, that they have never learnt anything and never forgotten anything. During the wearisome years of his exile, he as well as his brother and other princes of his House, instead of learning the moral of the events, instead of really understanding the new drift of French history, had learnt nothing, had seen nothing. He came back to the throne of France the same hopelessly conceited Bourbon that

his brother Louis XVI. and their grandfather Louis XV. had been. The policy the Bourbon government attempted was so far from being anything like in harmony with the political or social attitude of the French nation, that a few months after the accession of Louis the discontent in the country was general.

It is part and parcel of the ordinary mind that it cannot believe or really construct any of those great changes that from time to time have been coming over the nations of Europe. Europe is Greater Hellas not only in respect of its immense differentiation and individualization, but more especially in its intense love of profound changes in structure. Europe is not stationary; it has never been stationary. The Americans think that of all nations they are the most rapidly changing, the most progressive, the most dynamic. As a matter of fact, no close observer and student of American history can fail to notice that all the so-called changes in America are formal, external, and really don't touch upon the vitals of the nation. It is quite different in Europe. In Europe alone there have been real revolutions, such as the great moral and intellectual revolution of the sixteenth century called the Reformation and the Renaissance; the great French Revolution; the great Revolution of 1848. They have changed in Europe not only the forms of government but the very structure of its classes and its society. Of this remarkable power of profound change France, of all European countries, has the greatest share. In no other country can we notice the clear and broad fact that the nation made a perfect *tabula rasa* of all its social and political institutions; in no other country can we trace changes so profound, so absolute as in

France. The greatest of those changes happened through the French Revolution. It was a Revolution totally unlike the great Revolution of the Dutch from 1565 to 1609; or the Revolution of the English from 1642 to 1660; or the Revolution of the Americans from 1775 to 1783. In neither of the three Revolutions were the social, that is the deepest elements of the nation, ever touched upon; all the three referred to purely political issues, leaving the rest of the nation's organization untouched. The French Revolution on the other hand was a revolution proper, that is an alteration of the very organs, social, religious, moral and political of the entire nation.

Yet the Bourbons did not see it. It is well-known that most people after forty are absolutely unable to take in any novel idea or to conform to new habits. The Bourbons are a glaring example of that homely truth; they failed to see that the French nation, although largely opposed to the excessive ambition of Napoleon were not meant to be satisfied with the subordinate ungracious policy of the Bourbons. The discontent in the country was constantly spreading, and Napoleon in Elba, closely following the events, predicted, with that supreme clearness of mind so characteristic of him, that he would re-enter France and regain his throne without striking a single blow. This is precisely what he did. Early in March, 1815, he landed at Port Jouan, and by Grenoble, Lyons, he marched at the head of a few faithful soldiers on Paris without striking a blow. His old marshals that were now sent against him with orders to capture him, Ney in the first place, had no sooner beheld that Imperial figure and face that had led them to so many immortal vic-

tories, than they forgot their formal duty, and instead of laying hands on him as a prisoner, they went down on their knees before him, offering him their lives. And so Napoleon entered Paris at the head of the whole of the French army, received by the people who a few months ago had deserted him, with the most jubilant enthusiasm. The Bourbon fled and thus began the third and shortest period of Napoleon's life, the so-called "Hundred Days."

Napoleon, totally unlike the Bourbon, had learnt the lesson that the French people would not accept absolutistic rule even at his hands. Accordingly he promised them constitutional government, and there is little doubt that he meant to act up to his promise. He had therefore little if nothing to fear from those staunch Republicans in France that even in the times of his most glorious victories had opposed his reign. At home, therefore, he was in a pretty safe condition. It was, however, different abroad. The Great Powers of Europe had since October, 1814, met at Vienna in the famous Congress that was to rearrange the map of Europe, and the dictates of which, as a matter of fact, changed the whole political aspect of Europe for several generations after the fall of Napoleon. The Great Powers on hearing of the new and unexpected turn of events in France at once made up their minds to repeat what they had succeeded in doing in 1813 and 1814, that is to humiliate, to annihilate Napoleon, who to them was not only the reminder and cause of their greatest humiliations, but also and more particularly the great obstacle to their attempts and intentions to suppress all political liberty in Europe. Napoleon at once, by various declarations to the Courts

of Europe, in which he most solemnly declared to have no intentions of reviving his past, attempted to conjure the coming storm. However, the Powers, by their victories in 1813 and 1814, had taken heart and were convinced that by a new coalition they could not fail to defeat Napoleon ultimately and definitely. England, Prussia, Austria, Russia, in fact the whole of Europe again united to hurl over a million soldiers against France, and to rid the absolutistic sovereigns of their great nightmare, and the liberties of Europe of their possible protector. This is how the campaign of 1815 was brought about.

This memorable campaign has been written up by all the nations that had a part in it, and the literature of that campaign is undoubtedly far more interesting, and more filled with falsehoods and distortions of facts, than that of any other campaign in European history. The contradictions in the various reports of the three days of the Waterloo campaign from June 16th to June 18th, 1815, are so great that no ingenuity and no research can ever hope to reconcile them. To give a few examples:—In the Battle of Waterloo the Anglo-Dutch centre was at La Haie Sainte. Wellington himself says that the French occupied La Haie Sainte at two o'clock in the afternoon; Major Baring, on the other hand, who commanded the post, declares that he held his own on that post until six o'clock in the evening. Other witnesses give other hours. Or:—The great charges of the French cavalry directed against the French centre of the Anglo-Dutch army were, the French reporters say, successful in breaking the English squares. The English say the French never broke it. The French say that entire British

battalions were annihilated; the British say not a single battalion was annihilated, and so on *in infinitum*.

Under these circumstances it is certainly almost impossible to hope for a correct and faithful description of the tactical details of the campaign of Waterloo; fortunately for us the great labours, both of French, English, Dutch and German historians, enable us to see with absolute clearness the strategic details of that famous campaign. It is quite natural that the English, who in their fights from 1793 to 1815 had, with few exceptions, not been able to worst the French armies on land, and had on the other hand suffered in innumerable engagements at the hands of the French, signal and most annoying defeats; it is quite natural, we say, that the English have always tried to make the best of the campaign of Waterloo, and although at the beginning, that is from 1815 to 1830, a series of British generals, more especially Lord Vivian, who commanded the all-important left wing of Wellington's army, freely confessed to the fact that the Anglo-Dutch army could not have seriously thought of defeating Napoleon without the help of the Prussians, yet in times after 1830 the legend of the British victory at Waterloo was sedulously spread and steadily advertised until it seemed an absurdity to deny it. It is, as already remarked, a common feature of all small nations to exaggerate their victories over powerful nations, and all the victories of the English over the Scotch have never been able to efface the glory of Bannockburn, as all the victories of the French over the English will never suffice to obliterate the triumph of Crécy and Agincourt; or the Boer victories of Colenso, Magersfontein,

etc. However, the campaign of Waterloo has features of such serious importance that while the historian may good-naturedly tolerate the hymns of praise lavished on the heroes of Crécy or Bannockburn, he cannot afford to leave the historical truth with regard to Waterloo in the hands of national advertisers. For the first truth about Waterloo is this:—Napoleon was a dead man before he began the campaign. He had in the two former years, in 1813 and 1814, been not only defeated in open battle, but had been deprived of nearly all his army, of his prestige, and worst of all of the allegiance of his own nation, and it is therefore absolutely certain that Napoleon, even by a possible victory at Waterloo, could never have retrieved his position. A few more considerations will make that absolutely clear. Let us suppose that Napoleon on June 18th had succeeded in dispersing Wellington's army, as two days before he had succeeded in scattering the army of Blücher at Ligny, then he would have been at the head of—in the best case—50,000 men, while the allies marching against him already on the Rhine were at the head of over 800,000 men; in other words a victory of Waterloo on the part of Napoleon would have been absolutely identical with Napoleon's victory in 1814 at Montmirail or at Craonne; the allies, feeling that they had the immense majority in numbers, would have done in 1815 what they actually did do in 1814: they would have ignored Napoleon; they would have marched on Paris; they would have forced Napoleon to abdicate the second and the last time. Nobody knew that better than Napoleon. He, whose master mind controlled details as well as general features, had lost all faith in his star. It was not true

that he was ill, but it is true that judging the situation as it really was, he lost heart, knowing well as he did that no victory over Blücher or over Wellington could really save him. The researches of Houssaye have, it must be added, contributed one noteworthy feature to our final judgement about that campaign. It appears that Napoleon might have raised a new army of about 800,000 men in October, 1815. Everything therefore depended on whether Napoleon was able to hold out until October, when the new recruits might be ready, or whether he was forced to surrender before October. In so far, then, as the battle of Waterloo, by ruining the prestige of Napoleon, by giving such of the French as were against him the upper hand in the French Parliament, by depriving him of any chance of waiting until October; in so far, and in so far alone, the battle of Waterloo may be considered the final defeat of Napoleon. For it cannot be seriously doubted that Napoleon at the head of 800,000 men (although most of them would have been raw recruits) might have held his own against the allies. Waterloo deprived him of that possibility, and in that sense alone Waterloo was of greater efficiency and is of greater importance than Leipzig.

The general outline of the Waterloo compaign is simple: it consists of two double battles, one, the battle of Quatre-Bras and Ligny on 16th June, 1815; the other, the double battle of Waterloo and Wavre, on 18th June, 1815. In the first double battle Wellington was at Quatre-Bras, Blücher at Ligny; the two battle places were quite close to one another, and everything depended on Wellington helping Blücher. Until half-past six in the afternoon of the

16th June, 1815, Wellington was opposed by a French army, under Ney, more numerous than his own; after half-past six he received succour and was stronger than the French army. Blücher expected him then to repulse Ney and to march on Blücher's right wing, strengthen the Prussian army and help her defeat Napoleon at Ligny. Wellington repulsed Ney after half-past six, but he did not go to the help of Blücher. It is unknown why Wellington did not help Blücher. Blücher's army held its own against Napoleon at Ligny, but in the evening Blücher's centre was broken in, whereupon his two wings also yielded, although Napoleon's army was considerably smaller than Blücher's. Blücher took to flight and marched on Wavre, Napoleon sent after him Grouchy with 30,000; Grouchy mistook the direction of Blücher's flight and went on the old Roman road far too far eastward. The selection of Grouchy in that important manœuvre was a great mistake of Napoleon's, for, as Thiébault has shown us in his memoirs, Grouchy had always been an unreliable character and a poor general. On the other hand, Napoleon himself acted against all the principles of the "art" he had preached all his life, for instead of marching on Wellington with the greatest rapidity and annihilating him near Quatre-Bras, where Napoleon arrived with far greater numbers than Wellington disposed of, Napoleon, on June 17th, moved with inconceivable slowness and so gave Wellington a chance of escaping. Wellington retreated and concentrated in front of Waterloo; Napoleon, in the evening of the 17th June, encamped opposite Wellington at Belle Alliance. On the 18th June, the tactical and strategical position was an absolute repetition of

that of the 16th June: Blücher was at Wavre opposed by Grouchy; Wellington was at Waterloo opposed by Napoleon; everything depended on whether Blücher would join Wellington or Grouchy would join Napoleon. Already at eleven o'clock in the morning, before the battle of Waterloo began, there were 9,000 men under the Prussian general, Bülow, near the Anglo-German army, at Chapelle St. Lombard; and in the course of the afternoon Blücher's army arrived by instalments, so that at seven o'clock Napoleon, who had meanwhile succeeded in breaking in the Anglo-German centre at La Haie Sainte, found himself attacked by the Prussians in his right wing and in his rear, while the Anglo-German army was in his front; Grouchy never moved from Wavre. The result was the complete defeat of Napoleon at the hands of Blücher and Wellington.

The rest was a repetition, in that Napoleon was forced to abdicate the second and last time; he voluntarily surrendered to the Captain of the English ship "Bellerophon," and was then, at the advice of all the Powers, sent to St. Helena, where, after five years' captivity, he died on the 5th May, 1821. Each of the great Powers had a separate agent at St. Helena to convince himself of the presence of Napoleon in the lonely island, and over 4,000 soldiers were watching the great conqueror. Escape was impossible. That was the end of Napoleon I.

## VIII

### THE REACTION

THE fall of Napoleon, which chiefly the Russian, Prussian and Austrian monarchs had brought about, gave those rulers a free scope to carry out the real ideas and plans that had filled them ever since the outbreak of the French Revolution. As already remarked, their opposition to Napoleon had been caused chiefly by their desire to utilize the Napoleonic wars as a means of depriving the nations of the Continent of all their political liberty. To that purpose they assembled at Vienna (autumn, 1814), determined to re-arrange definitively the map of Europe and the institutions of the nations on the lines of the most uncompromising absolutism, thereby to undo for ever the work of the greatest revolution of modern times. They very well knew that France, now again a monarchy, could not, and that England would not, lend herself to a similar wholesale slaughter and destruction of all the great ideas of liberty and constitutional law, which the thinkers and heroes of the eighteenth century had spread and confirmed in the minds of the people. The scheme of Metternich and Alexander was from the very outset to shelve France, or, at any rate, to paralyse her diplomatic influence at the Congress of

Vienna. Prussia, too, was bent not only on restoring her ancient territory, on continuing her old established autocracy, but also on having her full revenge on the French and on the Saxons, the most faithful of the allies of Napoleon. The representatives of Prussia at Vienna were Hardenberg and Wilhelm von Humboldt. The latter, in his writings and private correspondence, was a most delicately attuned instrument for sweet words and noble thoughts. In his diplomatic activity, however, he agreeably surprised the potentates with a character so ruthlessly materialistic, so brutally high-handed, that he naturally formed the centre of that Prussian group which was determined to browbeat France at the Congress, and to annihilate Saxony. Humboldt, who in his "Letters to a Female Friend" (*Briefe an eine Freundin*), had shown remarkable capacity for the tenderest expressions of those ideals of which Schiller, the great German poet, had repeatedly given such sonorous expression; Humboldt, with genuine Prussian brutality, told Talleyrand, the representative of France: "Might is Right, we do not recognize the law of nations to which you have appealed."

However, Talleyrand, who had behind him a most varied experience in all the intricacies of European diplomacy, was more than a match for either Humboldt, Alexander of Russia, or Metternich. With great dignity and still greater cleverness he obtained, by playing off the counter interests of the Powers one against the other, a decision of the Congress that the smaller Powers, both in and out of Germany, will vote in the Congress as much as the great Powers. The interests indeed of the great Powers were clashing at

more than one point. Now that Napoleon was removed for ever from the scenes of his unparalleled achievements, the Powers had no more common cause to unite them in a sincerely common plan. For Prussia wanted the whole of Saxony, pleading that Saxony had been treacherous to Germany and merited annihilation. This, on the other hand, Austria could not possibly admit. For such an immense aggrandizement of Prussia would make her unduly powerful, and so render the inevitable conflict with Austria for supremacy in Germany, more imminent, and more dangerous. Alexander wanted to keep not only his old share of Poland but secure a larger portion of it. This was, again, against the interests both of Prussia and Austria. On the other hand, the smaller Powers of Germany, such as Bavaria, Würtemberg, Baden, Hesse, were siding with Saxony against Prussia, apprehending, as they did, that the threatened fate of Saxony might strike them too.

Austria again, or rather Metternich, desired to have all the strings both of international and of German politics in his hands, to dominate the Congress and to play the diplomatic Napoleon to the rest of the Powers. He was what the French very well call (and what is alas! a too frequent feature of Austrian statesmen) a *finassier*, a man who thought that he could easily outwit anybody, and in order to give himself the pleasure of doing so, Metternich often created artificial positions which only defeated his own ends. As a matter of fact, Talleyrand was the master of the Congress; he prevailed in the end on the assembled representatives to assert publicly the principle of legitimacy; a principle that he rightly thought would do more for

the ultimate pacification of the princes at any rate, than could any other diplomatic device. The principle was simple. Only such princes were to retain or to obtain territory whose claims were based on legitimate lines of inheritance or monarchic traditions. The representatives of England clearly felt that although England had combated France for the twenty-three preceding years, it was now in her interest to go with France; and by detaching England from the great Powers, Talleyrand easily became the acknowledged if not the desired umpire of the Congress. Metternich amused his guests with an unending series of festivals, balls, concerts, so that the Congress was called the dancing Congress. It was one of his most cherished self-flatteries that the surest way of duping others was to bewilder them with pleasures, the intoxication of which, Metternich believed, could do harm only to others, but not to the august serenity of his own superior mind. The amusements at Vienna were certainly most charming. However, the victory lay with Talleyrand.

The result of the Congress was as follows:—In Germany, Saxony alone was deprived of over one-half of its territory in favour of Prussia. The other smaller powers, especially Bavaria, that had played a double game with remarkable cleverness during Napoleon's triumphs and after his downfall, were left more or less in possession of the territories which Napoleon had given them in 1805 and 1806. The whole of the "German Confederation"[2] was given a Diet, and so, if in a feeble form, the Holy Roman Empire was partially revived. That Diet, however, was a mere farce, and all the real power in the

German Confederation lay between Prussia and Austria, or; considering the feebleness of the Prussian ministers, in the hands of Metternich. Italy became largely Austrian; the Polish question was solved in favour of Alexander, although Cracow was established as a republic and given neither to Russia nor to Austria.

The worst feature of the Congress, however, was the unwritten part of its legislation. As in so many other measures of high-strung politics, the unwritten, the latent, the implied portions were the most important. The Congress introduced that terrible system of reaction, of obscurantism, of police persecution that made the period from 1815 to 1848 one filled with the most shameful outrages against the liberty of the people. The nations of Europe felt that they had been most egregiously duped by the monarchs. They had been given to understand in 1813, 1814 and 1815 that they were destroying the great oppressor of European liberties, Napoleon. They now speedily learnt that the so-called oppression of Napoleon continued after his removal worse than ever, without any of the redeeming features of the great Emperor's genius. The slightest attempt on the part of any man in Germany or Italy or Austria to discuss questions of politics, to sing the Marseillaise, to publish a political poem, to establish the most inoffensive social club, to wear a round hat, in one word, to do anything that the stupid and reactionary instruments of monarchical police might possibly take an offence at, was visited with prison, with enormous fines, with the most degrading searching of houses, in short, with every possible mode of tantalizing citizens short of executing them. Met-

ternich in his boundless vanity, which, alas, the successes of so many years did apparently fully justify, Metternich actually thought that he could hoodwink all the liberal aspirations of the nations, and dupe or browbeat all their attempts at restoring a more popular government. Single excesses on the part of the people were cleverly utilized by him to obtain more and more general approval of his system. When, in 1819, one Charles Sand, a student, assassinated the famous Kotzebue, the writer of irresistibly comic comedies, but at the same time a miserable spy of the Russian government, Metternich knew how to avail himself of that misdeed to work upon the imagination of all the great and minor sovereigns, and more and more stringent police measures became the order of the day. The prisons of Austria, especially the Spielberg, near Brünn, in Moravia, and the Kufstein in Tyrol, were rapidly filling with prisoners doomed to years of captivity, some of them, like Kossuth or the Italian Silvio Pellico, men of the highest order of intellect and of the noblest patriotism.

In fact, the political intellect of the Germans, the Austrians, and the Italians, was locked up in prisons; the sun of liberty, as the German poet has well said, was screened off by hanging the hoods of monks and priests over it; and Metternich and his police were reigning supreme over a sullen and desperate people of over 50,000,000 souls.

The political history of those countries then, is reduced to the story of a few measures made by the monarchs and their ministers, the people having no voice in these deliberations. The measures alluded to were chiefly splendid Congresses which were held in

succession at Aix-la-Chapelle (1818), at Karlsbad (1819), at Troppau in Austrian Silesia (1820), at Laibach (1821), and at Verona (in 1822).

One of the most brilliant of French *causeurs*, Chamfort, once remarked that real history is only to be found with free nations, and that the history of absolutistic governments consists of mere anecdotes. The remark of the famous French wit is largely true, and applies with great force to the period now under contemplation.

The Congresses in question were proceeding on various lines and cross lines, and a full statement of each of the ambitions and aspirations of the diplomatic representatives and of the monarchs would indeed present a most amazing and confusing picture of apparently very important but confused events. However, as is generally the case in absolutistic countries, the apparent complication easily yields to the knife of honest statement. The various lines, aims and objects at the above congresses were practically reduced to three main policies. Alexander of Russia, with otherwise laudable persistency, tried either to engage or to dupe the rest of Europe so as to have a free hand in his oriental policy. Like all other Russian rulers his heart was set on Constantinople. It is more than doubtful whether the possession of Constantinople will in future prove more efficient, more really commanding than it has so far either in the hands of the Byzantine emperors or of the Turks. There may be very much exaggeration in the value attached to Constantinople. Yet as a matter of practical politics it is certain that the Czars have always desired that town as the third of their capitals, which in addition to

holy Moscow and to commercial and modern St. Petersburg, would add the imperial capital of so many Greek emperors and Turkish sultans. Alexander hoped to persuade Europe in 1818 to launch on an immense enterprise in America. Since 1810, as we have seen, the colonists in Latin America were in open, if not always successful, revolt from Spain. Alexander now convened the congress at Aix-la-Chapelle in 1818, with the view of persuading the Powers to send combined and huge European armies to the help of the Spanish king and for the suppression of the revolutions in Latin America. Alexander had long secured the imperial friendship of France by helping France to get rid of the army of occupation which the allies had left there in 1815. He therefore hoped that France would not seriously counteract his schemes. However, Metternich, who, both from personal pride and from reasons of policy, wanted to baffle the plan of Alexander, contrived to render the whole scheme futile and academic. Alexander thus left Aix-la-Chapelle without having realized his cunning device of engaging Europe in America, and the triumph of Metternich was complete. Alexander's policy was several times renewed by him and by Capodistrias, his chief minister, but with the exception of the Greek troubles it was generally thwarted by Metternich's superior cunning and diplomacy.

The second great line of political aims at the above congresses, and one which all the monarchs were readily accepting, was the determined suppression of any attempt at establishing popular liberty, whether in Spain, in Italy, Austria or Germany. Wherever the people, long tired of the obsolete system of reactionary

absolutists, raised their voice in favour of some progress or amelioration of their lot, there Metternich, Alexander and all their confederates at once employed all the rigours of police measures for the coercion and suppression of the "rebellious spirit." In Italy those rebellions were either local upheavals, as in Naples, Milan and Rome, or they were carried on all through the peninsula in the form of secret societies, such as the famous Carbonari. All these risings and rebellions were put down with a ruthless hand by Metternich and the Austrian army, so that, for instance in Naples, the people continued to be under the most wretched, most stupid and most unpardonable of petty tyrants, Ferdinand IV. It was the same thing in Spain, where the people had learnt with bitterness that they had driven out the greatest of modern rulers in order to fall back under the insupportable and cruel rule of the most wicked and most insipid of the Spanish Bourbon kings, Ferdinand VII. The Spanish had fought Napoleon and his army for six years, only to find that the Inquisition, the supremacy of the clergy in every walk of life, the lack of all commercial enterprise, the constant spread of poverty, in short, that all the obsolete features which Napoleon's legislation had swept away, or was certain to remove, were now again re-established. Patriotic Spain combated Napoleon, as we have seen, moved by a wrong motive. The result was that patriotic Spain sealed the fate of its own decadence to the present day. The very French whom they had combated for six years, were enabled in 1823 to march through the peninsula to the Trocadero of Cadiz, and to put down the liberties of the nation for the sake of that very Ferdinand VII. for whom the Spanish had

bled in their hundreds of thousands a few years previously.

In Austria and Germany the gagging of the Press, the imprisonment of anybody who ventured to utter a word for liberal institutions, the curtailing of all the possible rights of the Diet, in one word, the introduction of the most absolutistic *régime*, was scarcely interrupted by a little rising here and there, and with each successive congress more and more severe measures were proclaimed by Alexander and his colleagues for the radical extinction of liberals. The so-called Holy Alliance, or mystico-political treaty, that Alexander made with a few Continental Powers, and in which his reactionary views were clothed in a religious garb, was in reality partly superfluous and partly inefficient. The reactionary spirit of the Holy Alliance was practised well enough by Metternich without any religious garb, and the people in Germany have never been able to make a real revolution. The people in Italy were likewise unable to join in an open revolution, and thus both nations rendered Metternich's absolutism possible, and in the opinion of very many, even desirable. The student of the works of the great philsopher Schopenhauer cannot but be amazed when he reads in the writings of that undoubtedly profound thinker, that the period of reaction following after Waterloo was the wisest, the best, the most praiseworthy attempt on the part of paternal government for the benefit of people who had been enticed into imitating the "most absurd" and most criminal act of modern times: the French Revolution. Schopenhauer only expresses the views of thousands and hundreds of thousands of Continentals for whom politics is a *terra incognita*, and

who imagine that any form of government that secures peace, tranquillity and order is infinitely preferable to a government under which disorder at home, war abroad, and blunders everywhere are rife. This quietistic ideal of a state has no doubt great charms for invalids, incurables, millionaires and monks. However, the world, in addition to these worthy people, consists of an enormous amount of men and women desirous of change, of advancement, of stir, of progress. Nor can it be doubtful that errors and blunders, disorders and wars, are the price that one must pay for the temporary blessings of honourable peace. The ideal of Metternich, of Alexander, of Schopenhauer, spells decadence, stagnation, death. There is no general system of politics fitting for ever the needs, the wishes, the ideals of nations. The reaction under Metternich in the nineteenth century has done Germany more harm than did the Thirty Years' War in the seventeenth century, though under Metternich only a few hundred people were executed and no great battles at all were fought. The system of Metternich paralyzed and has to the present day crippled the people of Austria. It has, moreover, so impoverished the political vitality of the Italians, and so sorely beggared their resourcefulness in the fights for national ideals, that although they are now united, they are so, thanks not to their own forces or efforts, but owing to the magnanimous if ill-advised help of the French. There are few great ministers in the history of Europe who have in their lives done more harm to the people than has the fatuous leader of Austrian policy from 1815 to 1848. For, with the exception of the Greeks and to a large extent the French, no nation in Europe then was able

to shake off the torpor, the hypnotic condition of idleness and indifference, of dreaminess and morbid sentimentality that Metternich and his colleagues were able to infuse into the peoples of Europe. If the historian had the powers of the ancient witch-finders and inquisitorial judges, he would not hesitate to say that Metternich bewitched Europe. He was a demon of twilight as Napoleon was a hero of light. Even the blunders of Napoleon were blunders of a genius, in whom was embodied and by whom were represented many of the real historic tendencies of Europe. While triumphant, Napoleon did incalculable good through his institutions to the nations he conquered; by his defeat he gave them an unprecedented chance of recovering liberties that they had long been weaned from. However, so inferior were all the nations to that one unparalleled man that after his downfall they were unable to utilize their opportunities, and sunk into the state of Helots under a man immeasurably inferior to the imperial Corsican. Of Europe, previous to 1848, indeed it may be said with the great German poet: "*Eine Stallmagd dir und nicht Amalie!*"

In spite of Metternich's antagonism to any attempt at liberation, more particularly on the part of the Hellenes, the descendants of the noblest and greatest people of all history had already in the second decade of the nineteenth century concluded to rise against the Turks, their rulers. As is well known, the Greek descent of the modern Hellenes has been questioned in elaborate and very learned works, such as that of Fallmerayer, and much ingenuity has been spent in proving or disproving the pure or mixed origin of the modern Greeks. We venture to say that the pure or

mixed condition of Greek blood is supremely indifferent to the student of modern Greek history. No nation has pure blood, no nation has one racial element alone, and what constitutes a nation is not the blood but the mental attitude of every one of its members towards the fundamental questions of the country. If the Greeks actually believed, as believe they did, that they were the descendants of the victors of Marathon and Salamis, then for all historic and practical purposes they may be considered to be Hellenes; just as any man is an Englishman who in his heart of hearts really means to live in and for England, and eventually to die for her. On the other hand it is equally doubtful whether the Turks really so misgoverned the Greeks as to drive the latter into despair. The Turks are a noble race; they are indeed what Bismarck has long called them, "the only gentlemen of the Orient." In any case where the Turks are under the shadow of an accusation of cruelty or tyranny, the serious student would do well to suspend his judgement until more accurate sifting of the facts.

However that may be, the Hellenes had made up their minds to liberate themselves, both on the Continent of Greece and in the Greek islands, and with the most reckless disregard for life they fought the trained and terrible armies of Mahmud II., the Turkish Sultan, with the courage of despair and the success of men actuated by the highest ideals. True, that with their revolt from the Turks they started also civil troubles amongst themselves, and many an act of infamous treachery and most revolting cruelty was perpetrated by Greek on Greek. Their success in the Greek seas was so great that the Sultan finally was

forced to ask for help from Mehmed Ali, his governor of Egypt, who sent his son Ibrahim with a considerable fleet to Greece. So far the Powers had been paralyzed by mutual fears and jealousies. England had not extended a friendly hand to the Greeks, fearing that the ultimate profit from the Greek revolution would accrue to Russia. In France there was then, in 1824, a most reactionary king, Charles X.; and Metternich, chiefly from jealousy of Russia, was so opposed to the whole Greek adventure that he naturally did everything in his power to thwart the influence of the European concert upon the issue of the Greek revolution. Finally, however, the Powers united and agreed to send a fleet to the help of the Greeks. This was done chiefly because latterly the Turks had, in retaliation of Greek excesses, committed acts of the most harrowing cruelty and destruction, such as the wholesale massacre of the inhabitants of the island of Chios in 1822. The outcry in Europe was universal; the Philhellenes, the most famous of whom was Lord Byron, collected money, armies, volunteers, to help the cause of the descendants of those great Greeks whose works were then studied more than ever, and whose art was finally begun to be appreciated as the highest manifestation of the human mind. In 1827 at last the fleets of Russia, England and France went into Greek waters, met the Turkish fleet in the harbour of Navarino and completely destroyed it. The Czar Nicholas sent an army into the Balkan, contrived, although with great difficulty, to advance on the Turkish capital, and so finally, in the treaty of Adrianople (1829), the Sultan acknowledged the independence of the Greeks.

The great reaction sweeping over Europe ever since

the fall of Napoleon sterilized political life to such an extent, that, with the exception of the revolutionary events mentioned in the preceding chapter, nothing of real political importance occurred in Europe. The most remarkable feature of that reaction was, however, the intellectual movement of Europe, which, too, was a reaction strikingly and profoundly different from all the former moves in literature, art and poetry. For such is the Hellenic nature of Europe that all great political events have at all times had their intellectual and artistic counterparts. In oriental countries kings and dynasties come and go; battles and campaigns are won and lost; material changes of all kinds are made; but the social and intellectual life of the people scarcely undergoes any alteration. Not so in Europe. From all the political reforms and revolutions that have happened in Europe since the times of the Crusades, a real historian might easily deduce or infer the drift of literature, art, philosophy, and even science. It is thus quite clear that the immense change of politics all over Europe; that the cessation of all wars and of all the gigantic struggles on sea and on land that had engaged the forces and enthusiasm of Europe from 1789 to 1815, necessarily brought about a change in the mental and emotional life of Europeans. This great change or Reaction in Literature and Art, or as it is more commonly called, this Romanticism was weighing upon the minds of all Europeans until the outbreak of the great revolutions of 1848-49.

In the preceding period the literary life of the Germans, the Austrians, the English, the French, and of most of the other nations of Europe had been

proceeding on lines of classicism. It is difficult to put into a few words the nature of classical poetry or literature. Yet it is perfectly clear that classical literature aims at complete harmony between Form and Matter; at any rate the great models of the Greeks and Romans excel in that very harmony, and in the classical works of the Germans, such as the *Laokoon* of Lessing, and his dramas, *Emilia, Galotti, Nathan the Wise, Minna von Barnhelm.* In the immortal works of Schiller and Goethe we are struck with the beauty of form corresponding to the soundness of the matter. If, on the other hand, we consider the works and the writers who dominated European literature and art after the fall of Napoleon, we are chiefly struck with the remarkable phenomenon of great beauty of form joined to morbidness and unsoundness of matter. All romantical writers, whether of England, France, Germany or Italy, excel in beauty of form. Their style, whether in prose or in poetry, is a distinct advance upon the style of the classical writers. Nothing could be more perfect than the prose style of Heine, the great German poet; and the prose style of some of the great French romantics, such as Chateaubriand, Lamartine, Prosper Merimée and others is chiselled and sculptured to an extent far superior to anything that had preceded them. It is even so in poetry. The power of the Romantics, whether in versification or in blank verse and rhyme, reveals a richness of linguistic resource such as we seldom meet with in the works of the classical writers. Lord Byron in England surprised, it may now be said, the greatest students of the English language with the incredible resourcefulness of his versification. In Heine the German language

was adorned with a grace and light elegance such as the most sanguine admirer of that language could have scarcely hoped for. In Lamartine's *Élégies* and *Méditations* the French language revealed a mellowness and cadence such as the poets of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries had never reached.

But if we look at the matter used by these Romantic poets, we have to draw an entirely different picture. For it may be said that all of them, nearly at all times and in all their works, selected morbid or at any rate, such subjects as appear to us now strange and unwholesome. Goethe used to say that everything classical is sound, and everything romantic is ill and diseased. The Jupiter of German literature, in this as in so many other of his sayings, strikes at the very essence of the whole question. In the poets of the Romantic period we find, before everything else, strange and unwholesome ideas of the position and power of Woman. The familiar figures of the poetry of Lord Byron, of Lamartine, Heine and Leopardi, the great Italian poet, are creatures of a morbid fancy. They do not appeal to man's vigorous senses and normal mind; they are not meant to be worthy mothers or heroic spouses. They float in obscure mid-air, surrounded by a halo of moonlit romantic nights. They partake more of the nature of fairies and demons than of human beings. They derange the mind and the heart of man, instead of filling it with the holy enthusiasm of love. Not one of those familiar figures created by the Romantic poets has had a firm hold on the imagination of mankind. The classical writers created their Emilias, Margarets, Ophelias and Juliets; the romantic writers created only shadows. A curious side-

light is thrown on the nature of these female figures from the private life of these Romantic poets. While in their poems they celebrated in tones of admiration the charms of women utterly unknown to reality, they selected as their loves in real life women of the most material, most sensual, nature. Heine, whose familiar figures in his poems are ethereal, airy, demoniac, transmundane, Heine in reality attached himself in profound and uncompromising passion to the most material, most *terre-à-terre* creature that ever captivated the fancy of a lover. So too Lamartine, so too Leopardi, and so too Lord Byron. This circumstance alone shows that the female figures of these romantic poets were all unreal; that into the poems in which they celebrated them, the poets put not their real heart, but the affectation of heart and love. It is thus certain that in all these love-poems of the romantic poets there is a false ring, there is a permanent affectation of sentiment in which the poets themselves do not believe.

If we now turn to music we find the identical phenomenon. After a long period of strictly classical music we find after the downfall of Napoleon a period of Romantic music radically different from anything that had preceded it. It is possible to express that great change in technical terms of music. Classical music moves in the diatonic scale: Romantic music leaves the diatonic scale as much as possible and moves almost entirely in the chromatic scale. Romantic music created, as may be seen, an entirely new world. Though Romantic music, as well as Romantic literature, is largely unwholesome, self-conscious, and lacks *abandon*, yet, on the whole, of all the romantic intellectual

movements, the romantic music is by far the most successful. The two great exponents of romantic music at this time were Robert Schumann and Frederick Chopin. It cannot be denied that both of them sounded chords, and made vibrate strings of the human lyre such as had never been brought into sound by even the greatest composers before them. Schumann descends into depths for which we look in vain in the works of Bach or Beethoven. The profound passion, the mysteriousness of his *Études Symphoniques*, his *G Minor Sonata for the Piano*, the exultant joy of his *B Flat Major Symphony*, stand unequalled to the present day. Although Schumann's compositions are a musical continuation of the literary works of E. T. A. Hoffmann, they are yet a world by themselves, and have been equalled by nothing since the death of their incomparable composer.

Chopin is probably the most original artist that ever lived. Much to the detriment of his fame he has published, with few exceptions, only works of a small compass. Moreover, he called them mazurkas, waltzes, and polonaises, and thus gave his innumerable enemies an easy means of falling foul of such "dance music." As a matter of fact Chopin's music is of the most legitimate character. The author of the present work can testify from experience that on all his travels, from California to Roumania, and from North Germany to the southern states of America, he has heard no music played more often, admired more heartily, and appealing to the emotions of men and women more strongly than that of the unfortunate Pole. If one considers the extreme simplicity of the means employed by Chopin for the expression of some

of our most complicated and deepest emotions; if, for instance, one studies his *B Minor Mazurka* or his *Valses*, chiefly with regard to the number of tones and rhythms and voices he employs, one cannot but stand amazed at the immense power that he is able to instill into tone-figures of the simplest kind and into tone structures of an almost primitive description. Whether he is joyous or deeply melancholy; whether striving under the dark waves of fierce passions or soaring into the ether of heroic resignation, his beauty of form and perfect expressiveness of tone are unequalled. Although as self-conscious as Mozart was *naïve*, he yet stands nearer to Mozart than anyone else. Of his greater works his *E Minor Concerto* is by far the most precious, the most perfect of all piano concertos. Chopin was able to express in music dreams and fancies that neither poetry nor art can ever reach. In him we hear all the soul's ill, all the griefs of downtrodden Poland, all the nervousness of a heart wrung by an unhappy passion, all the deep discontent of an artistic temper with a world hurting it at all points, a world discordant and prosaic. Chopin, who died in his fortieth year, had long before fallen in love with Madame Georges Sand, whose "xth affair" he was. Of this woman, of whom the less said the better, he was fond, passionately fond, and it was no doubt that unfortunate love, which Madame Sand had neither the means nor the will to reciprocate as it deserved, that broke Chopin's heart and health. As in the case of Heine, one stands amazed at the fact that Chopin, whose mind was constantly brooding over ideals high and far off from any commonplace human beings, that Chopin, we say, could have felt a passion so deep and so intense for a

woman so materialistic, in spite of all the idealism in her novels, and so sensuous. As in the case of Heine, the life of the composer was utterly diverse from his life as an individual, and that complete severance between Chopin the author and Chopin the man told very strongly on Chopin's works.

If we now turn to another department of European intellectual life, to Philosophy, we find the same remarkable phenomenon of romanticism. The philosophy which shortly after the downfall of Napoleon, captivated and fascinated the mind of the Continent was Hegelianism. Hegel, Professor of Philosophy at Berlin, had, in a series of works, and still more by his lectures, propounded what certainly is the most startling system of philosophy ever proposed by a single man in modern times. There have been philosophers like Berkeley, Spinoza, Kant, and others, who have given to inquisitive humanity replies to some of the great problems agitating the human mind. Spinoza readily gives answers to the eternal questions about the relations of God to the world; about the fundamental principles of politics and of private ethics; but he leaves us alone and helpless whenever we ask him for solutions of the likewise eternal problems of art, of history, and religion. Other philosophers, again, give us hints as to an adequate attitude towards the great questions of religion and art, but leave us helpless and resourceless with regard to politics, to science, to ethics. Hegel alone of all modern thinkers has attempted to give us solutions to nearly all the problems of religion, science, art, ethics, and metaphysics. It cannot be denied even by his greatest adversary that over his works are strewn in myriads of gems, small

and great, a large number of *aperçus*, the suggestiveness and fertility of which are undoubtedly very considerable. Whether one accepts or rejects his system, it remains certain that in his works, now long obsolete in Germany, but extensively taken up both in England and America, there is a mine of thought and ideas that we do not find in any other thinkers of modern times.

Apart from the ideas of Hegel's system it is historically certain that he stands on a line with the poets and composers mentioned above, in that he, too, is thoroughly romantic. In his system, too, form is very much more finished than matter, so that his logic, as he himself thought, is the best portion of his system. In Hegel, too, as in the other romantic writers, there is that superabundance of subjectiveness which is so characteristic a symptom of the romantic mind, in contrast to the objective temper of the classical mind. It would be a great historical error to trace Hegel's immense influence in Germany during his lifetime, to the fact that Minister Altenstein countenanced and encouraged Hegel. Hegel's triumph was caused by the perfect sympathy that existed between his system and the intellectual temper of the time.

An overstrained subjectivism may be considered as the chief mental feature of the time. A philosophical system, such as Hegel's, was the very system most pleasing and in harmony with the trend of the continental intellect. Hegel attempts to build up the whole universe from the inside, from ideas, by means of a dialectic process which, he says, is productive of real truth, both in mental and natural philosophy. Nothing could be more certain of appealing to the

minds of men who turned all their attention to the internal mysteries of the human soul, and who were, in real life, in scientific research or in art, brooding over the enigmas of the human heart and of the human fate. When we try to find out the causes of this strange romanticism, we must confess that the whole period is still too near to us to admit of seeing all its workings in their due proportions. One cannot, on the one hand, deny that romanticism has produced results of an abiding and valuable character. It is certain that our reformed and better views of the middle ages, which by the writers of the eighteenth century had been condemned and ridiculed wholesale, is owing to the interest taken by the romanticists in everything medieval. No doubt they exaggerated it in the novels and historical works written by them on the middle ages, and they tried to throw an illegitimate glamour and halo over the crude, and in many ways, barbarous times of the medieval period. Yet, on the other hand, the romanticists opened up entirely new avenues of thought about the medieval growth of modern idioms. Men like Jacob Grimm revealed to the world the immense treasures of medieval and early modern Germanic language. Even the greatest feat of modern linguistics, the discovery of the near affinity of the Indo-German stock of languages, was mostly due to the enthusiasm with which the romanticists studied language in all its branches. They dream of entering a word of a language as one enters a small boat and let themselves glide down the waves of the past in this small craft to the origins of things and thoughts. That dream of theirs has done much evil both to history and philosophy. Words reveal

much, but they are in the position of pale photographs, and not coloured and living pictures of things. The influence of the romanticists in history, too, was very considerable; the interest taken by them in periods previous to the French Revolution gave rise to the establishment of historical schools such as the Ecole des Chartes in Paris, and similar institutions in Germany. The pupils and teachers of these institutions have, since 1830, so indefinitely increased our information about the middle ages and early modern times, that in the most brilliant and learned works published before the French Revolution on these periods (such as Gibbon's *Decline* or Robertson's *Charles V.*), now appear obsolete and past. Nay, it must be added that even in science proper the mystical pantheism of many of the romanticists has contributed very considerably to a deeper and more comprehensive insight into the workshop of Nature.

It is difficult to decide whether the balance of good things over bad produced by the romanticists is in favour of abiding results. What seems probable is that the whole immense reaction after the downfall of Napoleon was caused in the first place by the political circumstances of the time. The immense effort made both by the French and all the other nations of Europe after the gigantic struggles from 1792-1815, had practically exhausted their energy for active manly life, and they reverted from active to contemplative life. The political ideals so enthusiastically taken up by the greater part of Europe towards the end of the eighteenth century; the energy of idealistic methods pervading the lower classes of Europeans in the beginning of the nineteenth century; all that had

given place to a mental collapse. People were disgusted with the few and miserable results achieved by them. Very few of the ideals fought for had been realized; hundreds of thousands of families had been ruined; and the downfall of the greatest figure of the time, and the man who, really incarnating the whole revolution, impressed every single person in Europe with suspicion, and despair with regard to all the high-flown aims that had been the chief cause of the incredible rise of Napoleon. Both in the literature of the time and from the conversations of men whose fathers or grandfathers had lived during the period, one can easily gather the despondent melancholy filling the hearts of nearly all the continental people. After the immense and strenuous efforts of the revolutionary generation it was but too natural that a generation should follow whose minds were diseased, morbid, excessively sensitive, unfit for the realities of life.

Yet among the mental heroes of that period we find one who, while he underwent much of the influence of the period, yet soared so high above it that his works will for all time remain the great expression, not only of one limited period, but of the history of modern humanity in general. We mean Balzac.

It is one of the strangest phenomena in the intellectual life of the British, Germans, and French, that neither was able to recognize the surpassing greatness of some of their most extraordinary geniuses. In England, Shakespeare's unparalleled greatness remained unknown and unvalued for over one hundred years after his death; in Germany, the Titanic genius of Bach was practically unknown for over seventy

years after his death; the French have to the present day not quite learned to appreciate the true dimensions of the vast genius of Balzac. They praise Balzac as the English praised Shakespeare in the seventeenth century; they consider him a clever writer, a great writer, an interesting writer; they fail to see that he is infinitely more than all that, that he is not great but unique. His *Comédie Humaine* is a greater expression of modern Europe than is the divine comedy of Dante of Europe in the thirteenth century. The very form of Dante's work commands respect and authority; whereas the form of Balzac's works—novels—is in itself most unlikely to command respect and fill the reader with awe. Balzac is not the inventor of a *genre*; he is the creator of types of humanity as immortal, as replete with individual life as are the types of Shakespeare and some of the types created by the anonymous genius of peoples, such as *Faust*, *Don Juan*, the *Wandering Jew*, etc. His types of men and women are in reality more lifelike and have more vitality in them than any actual living man or woman can possibly have. His *Père Goriot* is like Shakespeare's *King Lear*, an immortal type of the paternal feeling; his *Grandet* is the classical expression of the great defect of most French *bourgeois*, of Avarice. In his works we find types of all classes, of all occupations. During twenty years he worked as no galley-slave ever laboured, writing and re-writing, correcting and re-correcting his novels, constantly intent upon his great aim, that is, to depict humanity. Napoleon's aim was to govern men; Balzac's to analyse them. Napoleon has created State institutions that no change of events can materially alter; Balzac has created

types of individualities, types of the institutions of the soul and heart, as it were, that no future events can destroy. Balzac captivates both the fancy and the intellect, and in him there is as much powerful imagination as there is subtle analysis. He is the prose-Shakespeare of France.

Even in this cursory description of the period of Reaction we cannot leave unmentioned the most famous and the most extraordinary executive artist of all times, Francis Liszt. It is well known that as a pianist he has never had his equal, and when we now read about the triumphs that his art won for him from Cadiz to Moscow and from the Caucasus to London; when we hear of the incredible enthusiasm devoted to a man who was apparently only a pianist; when we hear of universities offering him their Doctor degrees; innumerable towns making him their honorary citizen; countless women prostrating themselves before him, nay, eventually kidnapping him; we are, according to our modern tearless materialism, prone to think that whatever Liszt's genius was, his hearers and enthusiasts were probably decadent or subject to a lack of restraint unknown to our modern self-consciousness. On the other hand it is quite certain that Liszt's execution was animated by a soul, the manifestation of which on the piano must have appealed with immense power to the broadest, mightiest, and most noble sentiments of the Europeans. The author of the present work can testify from personal experience that the unique fascination of Liszt over all classes of men, cultured and uncultured, was the same in the seventies and eighties of the last century as it had been in the thirties and forties, when Liszt far distanced the

triumphs obtained by the famous violinist, Paganini. As a matter of fact, Liszt was not a pianist only, he was a great poet. He wrote his poems with his fingers on the keyboard. It was real poetry.

# IX

## THE REVOLUTIONS

IT had long been foreseen, for instance by Metternich's famous secretary, Gentz, that the Reaction and apparent submission of all nations to the absolutistic government of the monarchs was not to be of a long duration. The various revolutionary upheavals in Italy, Spain, Portugal, France and Germany had been, as we have seen, suppressed before 1848. In the previous chapter we have not touched upon the great revolution of 1830 in France, reserving a short statement about that famous event in connection with the various revolutions which in the end broke the power of absolutism. The July revolution of 1830 in France was in itself an event of small dimensions; it can in no way compare with the tragic events of the French Revolution. In one respect alone it will stand comparison with the greatest event of French history, and that is, that its effects upon the minds of Europeans were, if not as deep and lasting, at any rate memorable, more particularly in England, Poland, and Belgium. The revolution in France had long been prepared by the dissatisfaction among the French nation, and it was brought to a head by the stupid obstinacy of Charles X., who, rather successful in foreign policy (in

Algiers, in Turkey, etc.), easily persuaded himself that by suppressing the liberty of the Press he might restore the *ancien régime*. The liberty of the Press is in France what the *habeas corpus* act and the jury system are in England, and it has at all times played a far more incisive *rôle* in France than in England. In England there have been well-organized Parliamentary parties since the time of Charles II., who died in 1685; and politics have in England always proceeded on party lines, and have therefore taken into very much poorer consideration the academic expression of political opinions whether by great intellects or by the common people. In France, on the other hand, the real political parties of historical life have never existed. In England the liberty of the Press was in William III.'s time granted in a negative fashion; that is, the proposal to renew the licensing laws of the Press in Stuart times was simply shelved. In France, on the other hand, the liberty of the Press was given to the nation in the most explicit and positive form, and was always cherished by them as the greatest treasure of their political liberty.

Charles X., a narrow, stale and pedantic man, misread the whole political character of his people, and issued in July, 1830, ordinances, that is, laws on his own personal authority, practically destroying the liberty of the Press. The people of Paris instantly rose, the army practically joined them; Charles at the last moment wanted to make concessions; in the end he had to flee. The French now established the Orléans dynasty, and Louis-Philippe, son of "*Égalité*," as his father was called in the French Revolution, was made King of France. As will be seen from the above

sketch, the revolution of 1830 was, on the whole, of a rather academic character. A change of persons is not a change of institutions. Yet its effect upon the rest of Europe was immense. It is well known that it was the fear of a similar revolution in England that finally prevailed upon the Tories to yield the famous Reform Bill of 1832. In Belgium the people rose, and so violently clamoured for separation from Holland that in the end Belgium was established as a separate and independent kingdom, and this it has remained to the present day. In Poland the unfortunate people, taking courage from events in Paris, rose in a formidable revolution against Russia, hoping to be succoured by the French. They fought bravely, and defeated the Russians in various battles. In 1832, however, they were forced to surrender, and the Iron Czar, Nicholas I., deprived them of all the autonomy granted them by Alexander I., his predecessor, and placed them on a level with every other province of the Russian Empire.

The new King of France, Louis-Philippe, was expected by many of his friends and admirers to read the character of his people and of his time far better than had been done either by Louis XVIII. or by Charles X. As a matter of fact the new king affected an affability, a *bourgeois* modesty, that won him many a heart, and seemed to promise well for the future of France. However, as we now know, beneath that surface of kindliness and simplicity there was the old spirit of his race, tempered by the desire to do by France what Charles II. had done by England. Charles II., as everyone knows, secured to himself all the rights his father had fought for by means of a dis-

simulation which his father had been too haughty to employ. In the same way Louis-Philippe attempted to secure the essence of power while sacrificing some of its apparent forms. He repeatedly yielded, whether to his haughty minister Casimir-Perier, to the staunch Guizot, or to the astonishingly clever and adroit Thiers. He bowed before many a popular storm, and in 1840 went so far as to consent to the repatriation of the ashes of Napoleon from St. Helena. Amidst extraordinary solemnities the remains of the great statesman and conqueror were placed in a magnificent tomb in the *Hôtel des Invalides* in Paris. Even the conspiracy made by Napoleon's nephew Louis, subsequently Napoleon III., was visited with the relatively mild punishment of imprisonment in the fortress of Ham. In the various conflicts of France with England over the Oriental question; in the difficult diplomatic negotiations between Russia, Austria and France, Louis-Philippe tried to temporize and to tide over difficulties by patience and dissimulation. The material prosperity of France under Louis-Philippe was very considerable, in fact, with the exception of England, and probably on a par with England, the French were the richest nation in the world. In point of science they made considerable progress, and it was then practically acknowledged that the study of mathematics, natural philosophy and biological science in France was a model for the rest of the nations of Europe.

However, the mind of the French nation was against Louis-Philippe, as it had been against Charles X. The feeling against him grew, and in their numerous attempts on the life of the King and of other members

of the Royal Family it became quite manifest that the French, so long the leading nation in Europe, could not nor would brook their fall from former greatness under a clever but spiritless king. Already in former lectures we indicated that the French, like every really great historical nation, cannot possibly give up the dream of greatness, although at times both their statesmen and thinkers plead for peaceful and unaggressive development. When the French saw that Louis-Philippe was no more able than Charles X. to restore them to their former position in European politics; that their exploits were now practically reduced to the slow and difficult conquest of Algiers; when they learned from experience that their magnanimous dream of Liberty was realized no more under Louis-Philippe than under the last two Bourbon kings, they made up their minds to put an end to a *régime* which they neither loved nor feared. At that time two men, neither of whom was a great statesman nor a man of action inspired by some great historical initiative, Ledru-Rollin and the poet Lamartine, both conscientiously aided by Cavaignac, precipitated a revolution against Louis-Philippe in February, 1848, which was very adroitly utilized by Louis Napoleon. Louis-Philippe, like his predecessor, was driven from France, and Louis Napoleon became President of the French Republic. Like the revolution of 1830, so that of 1848, in itself devoid of any very startling events or of any great convulsions of national life, proved to be of the utmost importance to the political life of nations other than the French, for no sooner had the news of the February revolution in Paris reached Austria-Hungary, Italy and South Germany, than all

these countries rose in the most formidable revolutions they have ever started in modern times against their rulers. Of these revolutions in 1848 the most important and also the most interesting was the Hungarian revolution. This importance and interest of the revolution in Hungary is owing to two clear causes: First, the fact that the revolution in that country was not only a change of political but also of social institutions. It was the regeneration of an entire nation. While in Germany and Italy the revolutions at that time barely touched upon the social structure of the nations, in Hungary it revolutionized the whole body politic in all its aspects. The second reason for the superior interest of the Hungarian revolution is owing to the fact that Hungary, of all the countries then engaged in great political upheavals, was able to produce the most striking and historically important personalities, such as Louis Kossúth, Petőfi, the great poet, Count Széchenyi, General Bem, a Pole, and many others. As now at the present day everybody knows, Kossúth represented, not certain individual or temporary aims, but an immense historical tendency. At present, several years after his death, his son, in no way equal or even similar to his great father, is able to lead the whole Magyar nation owing to the mere fact that he is the son and natural representative of his father. Kossúth was indeed from many a standpoint an extraordinary man. In foreign countries his eloquence has been admired even more than in Hungary. In Hungary every peasant is eloquent; but amongst a naturally eloquent nation he was the most eloquent. His power of word and persuasion was indeed quite unprecedented. Gifted with a beautiful and

thrilling voice and a most majestic presence, he knew how to play on the sentiments and emotions of his hearers with a facility, with a natural force and fluency such as in those agitated times produced marvels of enthusiasm. It is doubtful whether he was a great statesman, for although it cannot be denied that the historical tendency which he tried to embody is one of the abiding features of the Hungarian polity, so that in point of principle he is and probably always will be the incarnation of one of the fundamental ideas of the Magyars, we may yet say that while his political strategy, irrespective of time, was great, as a political tactician he lacked too many qualities. Of him probably it will be found that his fame will broaden in future centuries, and yet the historian of his time cannot place him on a line with the less profound but more efficient statesmen of the great Magyar revolution. Hungary had, ever since 1825, undergone a social and political evolution that in its way has no parallel in the rest of Europe. The reform of the *ancien régime* in other countries came either from above in the form of royal decrees conferring the boon on a passive people; or it was brought about by most violent struggles, terminating as a rule in civil war. In Hungary the regeneration of the nation was brought about practically without civil war, and assisted by the magnanimous and patriotic initiative taken by the noblemen themselves. Previously to 1848 the noblemen paid no taxes and were altogether exempt. Under the leadership, however, of the greatest of "Magyars," Count Stephen Széchenyi, the Hungarians in various diets, from 1825 to 1848 held at Pozsony (Pressburg), carried out reform after reform until even before the

revolution broke out the noblemen had voluntarily placed themselves on a level with all the other citizens of the country, and every single citizen in Hungary was ready to go to any length of sacrifice for the amelioration and the regeneration of his country. The then Emperor of Austria, Ferdinand, was an imbecile. He was quite under the influence of his wife and her *camarilla*, and she thought that by hounding on the Croatians under Jellachich against the Hungarians, she would easily bring the unruly spirits of the Magyars to book without making any concessions. But the Magyars had no sooner learnt of the advance of the Croatians than they broke into open revolution all over the country. Every single Hungarian, whether a civilian or a monk, whether man or woman, a youth or an old man, joined directly or indirectly the army. Money was forthcoming from all sides, battles were speedily won, and in less than a year the Austrians were driven completely out of Hungary, owing chiefly to the resource and genius of General Görgei. The victory was complete, an independent Magyar government was established, and Kossúth was made the Governor of Hungary. In her predicament Austria now applied for help to Russia. Czar Nicholas, ever ready to suppress liberal movements, sent General Paskievitch at the head of a little over one hundred thousand men into Hungary, and although even the Russians were repeatedly worsted by the Hungarians yet shortly after the Russian invasion the Hungarians lost heart, and Görgei surrendered with the only remaining regular army of the Hungarians at Világos in 1849. So ended the Hungarian revolution. The Austrians now introduced political institutions in-

tended to do away with the last vestige of Hungarian freedom and autonomy. A wholesale process of Germanization was introduced, and Minister Bach and his so-called *Bach-Hussars* attempted to stifle the spirit of the nation that had for nearly a thousand years maintained its political independence and individuality. It is almost superfluous to say that Bach failed. The passive resistance manifested by the Hungarians from 1849 to 1860 was of such unconquerable force that even the young Emperor, the present Emperor-King Francis Joseph, convinced himself that the system was false, and so in 1860 various tentative proposals were made to bring about a better understanding between Hungary and Austria.

The revolution in Austria was shorter because the Austrian people, especially the German-speaking persons in Austria, have at no time realized the value or ideal of political liberty, and were, therefore, unfit to carry on a consistent struggle. The revolution in Austrian Italy was quickly suppressed by Austrian generals, of whom Haynau made himself notorious for his inhuman cruelty and General Radetzky for his dash.

On the whole, therefore, the revolutions in Austria and Austrian Italy were a failure. In Austria proper that failure was never improved, and to the present day Cis-Leithania has not yet reached the level of well-balanced bodies-politic. In Hungary and Italy the failure was, as we shall see, only temporary, for both very soon afterwards secured perfect unity, independence and prosperity.

As the period of Reaction had produced an intellectual reaction or Romanticism in every department

of literature, philosophy and art, so the revolutionary period rapidly introduced an era of intellectual revolution into all the spheres of science and literature. We saw that the key-note of the intellectual world during the period of reaction had been Hegelianism in philosophy and romanticism in literature and art. With the advent of the great revolutions in 1848-1849, both the intellectual movements of the Reaction were fast disappearing, and the period of positivism was introduced. The enthusiasm for Hegel and the romanticists had been intense and general. The reaction against them after 1848 was equally vast and intense. Before the revolutions Hegel seemed to satisfy the deepest desires of the human mind, and in France as well as in the German-speaking countries he was looked upon as the prophet of a new and perfect knowledge. Now, when the reaction against this system came, he was speedily handed over to ignominious oblivion. For a number of years after Hegel's death in 1831 his name created an authority so great that some of the most vital problems of theology, law, politics and literature were considered to be definitely solved by a reference to one of the Master's guiding ideas. David Strauss reconstructed or rather destroyed the life of Jesus on Hegelian principles; Stahl and others renewed the status of law on the basis of theories formulated by Hegel; the political science of the thirties and forties of the last century was almost exclusively dominated by the system and thoughts of Hegel. All this now disappeared. What Schopenhauer in writings at that time scarcely read had advanced in tones of unparalleled sarcasm against the value of Hegel's philosophy, in fact, against all philosophy

except his own, that was now beginning to be the opinion of the entire world. Philosophy was discarded, tabooed and despised; and its place was taken by the positive sciences. Already during the height of the reactionary period France, as we have seen, had been cultivating the positive sciences so successfully that the rest of Europe flocked to Paris for instruction in Astronomy, Physics, Biology and the other natural sciences. It was in the forties and fifties that a great Frenchman not only summarized the chief teachings of the exact sciences, but drew from them a system of philosophy meant to supplant all previous systems, and to impress the human mind with the spirit of an entirely new principle. That Frenchman was Auguste Comte.

A disciple of St. Simon, from whom he had taken many an idea and mental attitude; a mathematician by profession, and by his life and mental calibre purporting to be the prophet of a new world of thought; Comte in his *Cours de Philosophie Positive* (6 vols.), outlined what he took to be the coming mental revolution and new religious system. He called his philosophy the positive philosophy in sharp contradistinction from the existing systems, but denied that the human mind will ever be able to grasp metaphysical problems. According to him all that the human mind can do is to co-ordinate the most general truths of the principal sciences and to accept them as the highest system of general truth. He likewise taught that the existing systems of religion were doomed to decay, and that the only religion acceptable to the minds of modern people will be the Religion of Humanity. Even from this brief outline of his leading ideas the

reader may see that to Auguste Comte the connection between the mathematical, physical and biological sciences on the one hand, and the social and historical sciences on the other was very much more intimate than former philosophers had ever taught it to be. He taught that all the sciences are grouped according to a hierarchy rising from the sciences of simple to those of less simple subjects. Mathematics, he said, must precede physics as physics must precede biology; and as biology must precede sociology, or as he called it, *Physique Sociale* and the study of history. Of this hierarchy he likewise said that it is the most natural expression of the inter-dependence of the various sciences and of their historical development. He taught what he called the Law of the three Stages. In accordance with that Law our ideas and our social, political and religious institutions must all obey the same law according to which they pass from the theological stage to the metaphysical, and finally reach the positive stage. It is undeniable that if such a law should really hold good, it would be relatively easy to formulate innumerable facts of human history. Comte really thought that his law would cover all these facts, and in various passages of his great work he attaches to that law the same value that we attach to the law of gravity. Our experiences and researches since the appearance of Comte's book have, it must be confessed, not borne out this law. Yet, on the other hand, it is one of the clearest historical facts of modern times that Comte's ideas and the bent of his vigorous mind has in England and America, in France as in the rest of the Continent left deep traces of its influence. The present French Government is

really carrying out some of the ideas of Comte. It appears that the Governments of Brazil and of most of the South American states is proceeding on Comte's principles; and whether Comte's hope of putting his religion of humanity in the place of Christianity will or will not be realized, it will not be possible to deny that his ideas and teachings have to a very large extent prepared the era of science, and have materially contributed to the formation of modern European thought. In England both John Stuart Mill and Herbert Spencer essayed to carry out the principles of Comte; and the over-estimation of the power and the results of Science proper, which is so characteristic of the British mind in the latter half of the nineteenth century, is mainly due to the influence of Auguste Comte. At present some of us, at any rate, are trying to shake off the injurious consequences of that over-estimation of mathematical or exact methods. We have learnt to see that however great the value of Comte's ideas with regard to science, his application of those ideas to social knowledge and history has proved a failure. Science can help us very little, if at all, in the study of history. Yet with all the modifications now required for a due appreciation of Comte we cannot help classing him as one of the directing minds of the period inaugurated by the great revolutions of 1848 to 1849.

The revulsion from the romantic and metaphysical school of thought was in Germany, too, embodied by a man of singular interest, and whose works have had a considerable influence on European minds. We mean Alexander von Humboldt. He was not a philosopher proper, but he had a rare capacity of synthetizing the

vast knowledge that he acquired in his travels and also from books into clear and convenient generalizations, so that the ultimate work of his life, his *Kosmos*, was for his time a fair *résumé* of man's knowledge of Nature, written in a most finished and dignified style. He, too, contributed very largely to the preponderance of the exact sciences in the minds of European peoples; the sale of his *Kosmos* was quite unprecedented; and the nations of Europe seemed to be insatiable in the acquisition of that natural science of which Humboldt (a brother of the diplomatist mentioned in a former lecture) was the most prominent exponent.

The contribution of England to that new view of the worth and power of Science was in many ways even greater, and is summed up in the one name of Charles Darwin. His immortal book on the *Origin of Species* appeared in 1859, and both by the wealth of his data, the clearness of his expositions, and the absolute honesty and sincerity of the author, at once revolutionized biological researches. With a fullness and precision hitherto unknown to biology, Darwin made an attempt to explain the mystery of Species in a manner such as captivated and in most cases convinced the student. The term and idea of Evolution, tabooed by most of Darwin's predecessors, now rapidly became the watchword of modern thought. So deep was the satisfaction of millions of readers with the explanation offered by the theory of Evolution, that finally the very word seemed to be a sufficient explanation of events and institutions of nature both dumb and animated, nay, human. In the early sixties Evolution was considered to be the key to all the enigmas of history and sociology. A host of writers, both inferior in

knowledge and less cautious than Darwin himself, did not hesitate to extend the theories of Evolution to the problems of history and anthropology, ethnology, sociology, psychology and all the other branches of the Humanities. Tyler and Lecky in England; Draper in America; Hellwald in Germany; but especially Herbert Spencer, in writings very extensive and very numerous, declared Evolution to be the long-sought-for means of unriddling the universe. In our days a reaction has set in against the over-estimation of Evolution, and as the author has tried to show in another work, the proofs and theories of evolution do not account for nor do they explain the leading events of history. But for our present purpose it is sufficient to note that in the sixties, let alone the seventies and eighties of the last century, the undue value attached to the exact sciences led to the extension of their methods far beyond anything that they can be legitimately applied to. Not only philosophy but also theology, the theory and law of politics and literature, and similar subjects, were misconstrued or tabooed because of that exaggerated love and admiration of the exact sciences introduced into modern minds chiefly by Comte, Humboldt and Darwin. As a side consequence of that overdone interest in science proper we must note the rise of materialism as taught especially by Carl Vogt, Carl Buechner, Moleschott and others. With the characteristic neglect of history so prominent in students of the natural sciences, the teachings of materialism were submitted to a curious world of enthusiastic students as the latest outcome of the human intellect. Albert Lange had no great difficulty in showing in his excellent *History of Materialism*,

the absence of all claims to originality in the modern materialists. However, the tendencies of the people were so strong, that materialism together with agnosticism, and a preposterous neglect of the vast historical importance of the holy writings of Christianity, made up the intellectual calibre of most of the cultured people in Europe in the sixties and seventies of the nineteenth century.

Even these few facts will suffice to show that the great revolutions in the middle of the last century, while they purified the intellectual atmosphere of Europe of very many of the worst miasms of romanticism, undid on the other hand many a wholesome and valuable line of intellect cultivated by the romanticists. At the present day we still struggle between these two conflicting lines of thought, and most of us are inclined to think that although the romanticists were largely wrong, the scientists and positivists were not wanting in deficiencies of considerable gravity.

# X

## THE UNITY OF ITALY

THE political events in the twenty years from 1851 to 1871 were so great that they can, like all great events be summed up in a few clear words. They may be reduced to the following five groups of facts:

(1) The establishment, prosperity and downfall of the second French Empire.

(2) The fall of the Austrian Empire from its former greatness.

(3) The defeat of the Russians by the English and French, and the consequent gravitation of Russia not towards the West, but towards the East, that is, Asia.

(4) The rise of the unity of Italy.

(5) The rise of the unity of Germany.

It will be seen that these five groups of facts completely changed the physiognomy of Europe. France, after a temporary rise to first-class importance, was humiliated and deprived of her great influence. It was so with Austria, which up to 1850 was one of the great Powers and of decisive influence in all Continental matters; it was even so with the influence of Russia, which for a long time back had been appreciable in nearly the whole of Europe and which now proved unable to make any headway, whether in the south-west portion

of her Empire, or in Germany, and was forced to seek for new fields of conquest in uncivilized Asia. Finally, by the rise of a united Germany and Italy, new powers were introduced into the concert of Europe which, as everybody knows, have had influence not only on the Continent, but on the international position of England, America and the Far East. These momentous changes were realized chiefly by the genius, luck and energy of two men, Bismarck in Germany and Cavour in Italy. If we now add similar events, not as comprehensive, but of almost equal importance, such as the unification of Hungary by Francis Deák and the rise of the Danubian principalities and kingdoms (kingdom of Roumania, kingdom of Servia, principality of Bulgaria, etc.) we have exhausted the number of really important and influential events during the latter half of the nineteenth century.

Louis-Napoleon, as we saw, was made President of the French Republic and by the *coup d'état* of the 2nd December, 1851, he made himself Emperor of the French. There are few men in modern history with regard to whom the judgment of their contemporaries was led astray in a more pitiable manner than with regard to Louis-Napoleon. As the heir of the great Napoleon he impressed the nations and gave rise to an appreciation wholly out of proportion to his real merits. Napoleon III. was neither a man of genius nor a man of action. He was a strange combination of a dreamer and yet a persistent worker; a man lacking in the chief quality of a ruler, that is, in the sense of proportion as applied to the great events and leading persons of his time. Nearly all the ideals floating before his mind were unpractical and adverse to the

interests both of his dynasty and of his subjects. He pursued a nationalist policy, dreaming of the union of nations and wasting his time, money and power on an enterprise that promised neither glory nor profit.

The Italians, ever since they had been united into the kingdom of Italy by Napoleon the Great, had never given up the idea of restoring the unity of the peninsula. That idea had been in their minds and hearts for over a thousand years previously. The greatest minds and characters of Italy; generals and admirals, thinkers, poets and men of action, all had, in innumerable books, articles, poems and actions, attempted to pave the way for the restoration of the unity of Italy. All these attempts had been, however, in vain. It is one of the deepest lessons of history that Italy, which in times before Christ had, under Roman rule, succeeded in uniting the whole Western world, was, after the fall of the Roman Empire in the fifth century of our era, absolutely unable to make good her own unity. It is a further curious teaching of history, it must now be added, that the unity which Italy before Christ conferred upon the European world and which after Christ she was unable to secure for herself, was in the nineteenth century given to her by the great Powers of Europe, chiefly by France. Thus there is no exaggeration in saying that the unity which Italy formerly gave to the world, the world gave to her in the nineteenth century.

The forces of the Italians themselves were curiously inadequate. In the Italian character there are, as in all high-strung natures, the most surprising contradictions. In private life there is no more dramatic nation than the Italians, yet they have never produced dra-

matic literature of any high order. In public life there are no more ardent politicians than the Italians, and their wonderful intelligence, dash and courage seemed to promise national or concerted action on a grand scale. In reality, however, the Italians of the last century consistently shrank from grand and open actions, and their greatest statesman, Cavour, instead of choosing the methods of Bismarck or of some Italian hothead like Garibaldi, unswervingly clung to methods quite the reverse of open warfare and military exploits. Already during the time of the Reaction, as we have seen, the Italians essayed to make good their unity by secret societies, anonymous risings, and nameless political murders. It seemed impossible to prevail upon the people in Italy to rise in a body. With all due recognition of the immense merits of the Catholic Church for the rest of the world it cannot be denied that in the nineteenth as well as in the preceding centuries the Papacy prevented the Italians from accomplishing any great action on behalf of Italian unity. The Papal States took up the very centre of Italy and thus cut the peninsula into two halves, linked by a state neither national nor powerful enough to offer protection. This "third body" in the polity of Italy has, as already Machiavelli observed, always been the real cause of the disunion of Italy. The Popes had in former times very frequently invoked the help of foreign potentates in order to foil any attempt on the part of Italian princes or heads of states to secure the unity of Italy. Cavour now turned the tables on the Popes; and the very policy that they had used for centuries to deprive Italy of the advantages of union was now utilized by Cavour to secure that unity, despite all the

antagonistic policy of the Pope and of the smaller monarchs in Italy. Bismarck, as is well known and as we shall see in a subsequent chapter, had proceeded on the lines of a policy in many ways directly opposite to that of Cavour. He, too, laboured at the unity of Germany, but he was convinced, and events proved him right, that that unity could only be obtained by "blood and iron." Cavour, on the other hand, who had made a deep study of English, French and Italian history, had come to an entirely different solution of the same problem. Without entirely discarding the more aggressive patriots, he was determined to secure the unity of Italy by making that great aim an interest of France in the first place, of England and Prussia in the next. Once, he rightly thought, the great Powers of Europe, or most of them, are interested on behalf of the unity of Italy, their combined forces will force down all opposition on the part of Austria, the Pope, or the King of Naples; just as had been the case in 1830 when Belgium wanted to become an independent State and succeeded, because England in the first place, and also other Powers, had an interest in seeing Belgium separated from Holland.

The deep diplomacy of Cavour was very considerably aided by some of the most excessive radicals, demagogues and patriots of Italy. For this is the unfailing sign of a great policy, that circumstances apparently opposed to it are in reality helping it forward. Nothing more contradictory can be imagined than the cautious, prudent, cunning policy of Cavour, and the exaggerated zeal of some of the Carbonari who, like Mazzini, Orsini and others, were firm in their belief that the unity of Italy could be achieved more rapidly

by the dagger and the bomb than by diplomatic negotiations. Yet these very radicals and extremists helped Cavour so essentially that his great triumph in July, 1858, the secret alliance with Napoleon III. was entirely owing, in the first place, to the desperate action of Orsini in January of the same year. A few words will put that quite clearly. Cavour in reality, as an Italian statesman, was technically only the minister of the King of Sardinia, that is of the western part of Lombardy, then a small and unimportant country. The diplomacy of the House of Savoy or the Kings, formerly the Dukes, of Piedmont in Sardinia, has, like that of many a small nation surrounded by mighty powers, always been characterized by exceeding subtlety and carefulness. It was in Cavour that that dexterity in seizing the reins of diplomacy was carried to its highest perfection. Cavour wanted to persuade Napoleon to wage war with Austria, which ever since the Congress of Vienna had been the most important military power in Italy. Austria possessed practically the whole of the north of Italy except Sardinia, and was preponderant in the rest of the peninsula. The King of Sardinia single-handed could not hope to cope successfully with Austria; and no serious hope of uniting the other monarchs of Italy against Austria could be entertained. Military help therefore was bound to come from France. It was sufficient for Cavour that England and Prussia should give their moral support in the matter, which they both did in ample measure. Already in 1854, when England and France had begun the Crimean campaign against Russia, Cavour, in order to place them under obligations to Italy, had sent out a considerable corps of Italian

soldiers to the Crimea as an auxiliary army for the allies. The decisive event, however, was the *attentat* of Orsini. It appears that Napoleon III., long before he succeeded in ascending the throne of France, and when he was still a roaming adventurer, had promised to the Italian patriots that whenever he should succeed in his aspirations he would extend to them a helping hand and put an end to the political and social anarchy of Italy. There is little doubt that Napoleon took these promises pretty seriously. Like all the members of the Napoleon family he had deep Italian sympathies; and, moreover, his general policy made him take his early promises to the Italian patriots as part of a policy both practical and sublime. However, the exigencies of his home as well as his foreign policy, the great war with Russia from 1854 to 1856, had prevented him from realizing his promises; and to numerous secret reminders on the part of the Italian patriots he answered evasively. These patriots had always threatened him with death unless he redeemed the promises made to them in the autumn of 1857, the most resolute of these patriots, Orsini, left London for Paris, determined to put an end to the life of Napoleon. With several accomplices he ambushed Napoleon in a street near the Opera in Paris, whither Napoleon, his wife Eugénie, and other members of his court were repairing in the evening of the 14th January, 1858. Orsini and his accomplices threw several bombs at the carriage of the Emperor; the bombs exploded, and killed and wounded over one hundred and forty persons; however, the Emperor and his wife escaped unscathed. Orsini in prison behaved with the most heroic steadfastness. Napoleon really wanted to pardon him, but

it appeared that it would have been unwise to pardon the assassin of so many persons; the indignation of the French public was too intense. Orsini, however, made the Emperor promise that a French army would enter Italy and wage war with Austria, and having obtained this formal promise from Napoleon, Orsini mounted the scaffold with serenity.

Napoleon could no longer doubt the very serious character of the threats constantly levelled at him by the Italian patriots. Under the pretence of taking the waters at Plombières in central eastern France he had an interview with Cavour, and there a formal alliance was made and a promise given that at an early date war should be made against Austria both by France and Sardinia, and after the successful termination of the war Austria's power in Italy would be put an end to.

Although Napoleon, as already remarked, was quite sincere in his ideas about the principle of nationality, and seriously believed that nothing but good could come from a still greater union amongst the distracted territories of Italy and other countries, yet personally he was not in favour of the union of the whole of the Italian peninsula. Already at that time a number of French diplomatists and politicians warned him of the inevitable consequences that a unity of all Italy could not but entail upon the prestige and power of France. Italy, they said, if united, will only be the prelude to a similar union in Germany and in other portions of Europe, and France will inevitably suffer from the rise of new and powerful national states. Napoleon did not deny the force of these arguments. However, he hoped to keep the patriotic enthusiasm

of the Italians within bounds, and to make of Italy, not one kingdom under the rule of the House of Savoy, but four kingdoms under the suzerainty of France. In this entirely false view he was confirmed by the subtlety and diplomacy of Cavour, who himself very well knew that once Austria's power was broken in Italy, and the friendship and moral support of France and England secured, nothing would be able to prevent the Italians from establishing themselves as one single united monarchy. Napoleon declared war against Austria, and the war was rapidly finished by the campaign of 1859, the two most important engagements being at Magenta, near Milan, and at Solferino, close to Mantua. The Austrian army, although in nowise inferior to that of the French, was badly generalled, and a few misunderstandings sufficed to produce the defeat of Austria in both engagements. The Italians, drunk with enthusiasm, wanted to force Napoleon to continue the campaign, hoping to oust the Austrians from Italy altogether. However, Napoleon now took fright at the vast waves of national enthusiasm roused in Italy. In order to keep it within bounds he hurried on a peace with Austria at Villa Franca. According to that peace the Austrians were still to retain very considerable Venetian territory in Italy; but the rest of Lombardy they handed over to Napoleon, who ceded it to the King of Sardinia. The Italians were furious in their disappointment. They considered Napoleon a greater enemy of theirs than were the Austrians. They claimed, and not without a fair show of justice, that one more battle, the success of which was scarcely doubtful, would have made secure the unity of Italy. They reproached Napoleon

with a childish fear of the anger of the Pope, Pius IX., and with the intention of keeping Italy in her old anarchy. Garibaldi and other Italian patriots, especially Mazzini, published innumerable pamphlets, calling upon the Italian nation to rise in a body and to drive out her enemies. Cavour, who continually clung to his diplomacy, and who was, moreover, crushed by illness, overwork, and the considerable strain of continuous vigilance and diplomatic negotiations, Cavour still managed to hold the balance between the wavering of Napoleon, the hostility of the Austrians and the Pope, and the excessive claims of the ultras. He died in June, 1861, and by that time the unity of Italy was a foregone conclusion. The patriots under Garibaldi had, by their bold initiative in Sicily and Naples, so irretrievably engaged and compromised the people of southern Italy, that one part of Italy after another declared Victor Emmanuel, hitherto only King of Lombardy, as King of Italy. The inevitable and necessary advent of the unity of Italy was finally quite clearly shown in 1866, when Victor Emmanuel, although beaten by Austria on sea and on land at Lissa and at Custozza, nevertheless made good his claim to the Venetian territory still in the hands of Austria, so that the whole of Italy, except the city of Rome, was in August, 1866, under the rule of Victor Emmanuel as King of Italy. The City of Rome was entered by the Italians a few weeks after the commencement of the Franco-German War, and ever since Italy has been a united monarchy.

The events of the fifties and sixties of the last century fully proved the correctness of Cavour's policy. He was right in thinking that the famous saying,

"*Italia fara da sè*," "Italy will do it all alone," was a useful war-cry, but historically and diplomatically the greatest untruth. It was not Italy that made the unity of the peninsula: it was France; it was, to a certain extent, England; it was Prussia. The result of Cavour's policy redounds to his personal glory as much as did later on the results of the policy of Bismarck to the glory of the Germans. We say, to Cavour's personal glory, for we mean to intimate that his policy exalted far more his own genius than it contributed to the greatness of Italy. No nation that has won her liberty and independence at the hands of another people can ever hope to rank as a really great nation before many a generation after her liberation. Had the Italians won the battles of Magenta and Solferino single-handed, and without the aid of anyone else, as the Greeks did the battle of Salamis, and the English their battles against the Armada, or the Germans the battles against France, there would undoubtedly have been a far more rapid growth in the social economy and political reconstruction of Italy. The forces that made Italy were not her own forces; and so the immense impetus given to a nation by the triumphs on all-important battle-fields has been lacking to her. More than thirty-five years have now elapsed since Victor Emmanuel was made King of all Italy, and while the Italians have been making great efforts to work the regeneration of their nation, and while by international courtesy they are considered a great Power, yet in reality they are far from being so. Internally sapped by the relentlessly hostile agitation of the Catholic Church; her southern provinces cankered by ignoble poverty, brigandage, and total lack of industrial enterprise; her population

constantly drained by emigration to South America; Italy is still far from that greatness that her patriots hoped to see as soon as the enemy, more particularly Austria, should leave the country. There is of course no reason to despair of Italy. Her nation as individuals are in many ways the most gifted in Europe. The resources both of her moral and intellectual nature are boundless: her position in the centre of the Mediterranean opens immense vistas of material success for her in the near future, but the initial mistake of winning her independence at the hands of others will tell on her heavily for many a year to come.

# XI

## THE UNITY OF GERMANY

THE history of the unity of Germany is in many ways one of the most instructive chapters of history. For it is in Germany perhaps more than in most countries that the old perennial and terrible fight of man against nature has been fought out, and finally led to results considerable and perhaps all-important. Like all the other nations of Europe the Germans too have always tried to make the limits of their country conterminous with the limits of their language. Europe has at no time been given to the Roman ideal, and just as a United States of Europe is, as we shall see, impossible in the near or in the far future, so it was impracticable in the last 2,000 years. Europe consists at present of over forty highly organized polities, each of which clings to its personality in language, law, custom, and every other feature of national life with uncompromising tenacity. Each of these states has at all times tried to combine and unite its members and to separate itself from its neighbours. The centripetal forces in Europe have always been in the minority, and even the greatest emperors and conquerors have found that their dreams of uniting Europe under one rule were shortlived and sterile.

This work of union, this attempt to bring together in one highly differentiated state the members of one and the same nation, this old historical endeavour of the European peoples has been realized in some countries earlier than in others. The English proper realized it already in the early middle ages, and what is at present England and Wales were one country already in 1284. Next came the French. It took an enormous number of wars, battles, sieges, campaigns, intrigues, marriages, treaties, etc., in fact, all the resources of pacific and warlike policy, to unite the south of France with the north, and the west with the east. At last, under the Bourbon kings, already early in the seventeenth century, and with regard to Lorraine in 1766, all the parts of modern France were united under one rule, although the homogeneity of the people was still far from complete, as we have seen in the first lecture on the French Revolution.

Germany proper was unable to secure her unity before the latter part of the nineteenth century. Germany is mostly an inland country, and has so far had no considerable sea power. It will be noticed that inland countries are not easily united; and even a common ruler leaves the people, the subjects themselves, in a state of utter discrepancy and divergence between one another. It is really the sea that unites people, and France having a very considerable sea power already in the seventeenth century, had in this very circumstance an enormous leverage over Germany. Of the diverse elements of what was called the Holy Roman Empire of the Germanic nation in previous centuries, it is very difficult to form a definite idea. The number of sovereigns, from a small lord to the

Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, who all had sovereign rights over their respective subjects, is positively amazing. There is no exaggeration in stating that between the Rhine and the Elbe rivers the number of very small, small, great, and greater sovereigns in the seventeenth century was over 1,000. Even then the fiction of a united Holy Roman Empire under the German Emperor was upheld, but it was a mere fiction. The emperor had no fixed nor considerable revenue; he had no standing and efficient army; and being at the same time the ruler of Austria and Hungary he had no vital interest in the welfare of his provinces outside his Danubian monarchy. In fact the interest of the Habsburg emperors was rather the other way. The more Germany was split up into innumerable little sovereignties, the more it was unable to offer very great resistance to the Habsburgs. The great international treaty of 1648, the so-called Westphalian Peace, had really increased the anarchic state of Germany, and by its terms Sweden and France stood as guarantors or perpetuators of the German anarchy. It is at the present day almost impossible to realize the confusion, the chaos, the incredible disorder, that reigned in Germany in consequence of this political dismemberment. Each sovereign had coins of his own, had customs-lines of his own, had little armies of his own, separate individual codes of law of his own; the religion of the sovereign decided as a rule the religion of his subjects, and a very considerable portion of Germany was "under the crozier," belonging as it did to powerful ecclesiastical potentates such as the Archbishop of Cologne, of Mayence, of Trèves, and the Bishops of Bamberg and Würtzburg.

Litigation in the courts of these small sovereigns, and appeals to the central court of the Emperor, were, as a rule, exposed to the most exasperating delays and to ruinous expense. The great German poet Schiller, in his tragedy *Kabale und Liebe* ("Intrigue and Love"), has given us a terrible picture of the cruelty and oppression practised by these petty tyrants. Commerce flourished very little, and the German towns had long fallen from that commercial importance which they had reached in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The people were quite indifferent to their lot, and did not even rise when the Landgrave of Hesse sold them like chattel to the English to fight the Americans in the war of 1775-1783. The position of the women was, especially in the seventeenth century, most degrading. The German woman, at no time endued with any superior intellectual energy, was in the seventeenth century an altogether obscure and insignificant partner of her husband. It is true that in the first half of the eighteenth century the status of German women was considerably raised, and we hear of many an energetic, highly intellectual and cultivated woman in the lives of the great German writers of that century.

This rapid sketch of the misery of the Germans for lack of political or economic unity must now be supplemented with a picture of a more agreeable kind. The Germans, while politically paralyzed and unable to shake off the torpor that had fallen upon them since the end of the Thirty Years' War in 1648, had yet one great ideal in common, and as they call it themselves, while Germany was practically a mere geographical expression, "Germandom" (*Deutsch-*

*thum*) soon began to exert itself. To put it in plain words, the unity of the Germans was, in contrast to that of the English and French, at first not a political unity but an intellectual one. They were politically as diverse as if they had been total foreigners to one another. Intellectually, however, they began, ever since the second half of the eighteenth century, to feel themselves as a nation, to learn the immense value of their language in scientific and literary works, and so to feel a consciousness of German nationality which, although still lacking political union, yet prepared the way for the latter too. In this sense the history of German literature is even more important to the historian than is the history of French or English literature. The works in which for the first time the unparalleled resources of the German language were made use of were the greatest possible incentive to a feeling of nationality in Germany. Even up to the middle of the eighteenth century all the most valuable works published in Germany were still written either in Latin or in French. When, however, in the second half of that century Lessing, Herder, Goethe, Wieland, Schiller, and other very numerous German writers, in works—many of which will survive for ever—manifested the astounding power of the German idiom, its adaptability to prose and poetry alike, its capacity for the highest philosophical researches as well as for the lowest comedy; its force in narrative, didactic and descriptive style alike, when all this became clear to the enthusiastic readers of these authors, the Germans felt that a new era had begun in their history. As in the sixteenth century the spiritual reform of the Reformation had brought home to the Germans their

spiritual unity, so in the first half of the eighteenth century and in the first third of the nineteenth century the constantly increasing number of classical works written in German impressed upon the Germans the fact that they were fast becoming united intellectually too.

The disasters falling upon the Germans from 1805-7 at the hands of Napoleon, and of which we have been speaking in former chapters, could not but impart to every single German a feeling that a nation cannot rest with a unity which is only intellectual and spiritual. More than that was needed. Political unity was required, and it now became not only a dream but a practical interest for all Germans to consolidate the unity of their political edifice in order to reap the benefit of their spiritual and intellectual unity at leisure. At that time the question really was, not whether the political unity of Germany should be attempted, for on that point all German-speaking nations were at one, but which German power should realize the unity? As we have seen, the house of Habsburg or Austria played, even in 1815, a considerable *rôle* in the so-called German Confederation, and until 1850 the King of Prussia, the only rival of the Habsburgs, could not secure any ascendency or hegemony in that Confederation, and thus it was that the unity of Germany was by very many people hoped to come from Austria. The problem, therefore, which the Germans had to solve in the second half of the nineteenth century, was whether their political unity should come from south Germany or Austria, whence had come their spiritual and intellectual unity, or whether it should come from northern Germany or Prussia, which had hitherto done little

or nothing for the intellectual regeneration of the nation except the establishment of a few universities, and which had in 1806 and 1807 proved itself to be utterly helpless, disorganized and decadent. Such as hoped to see the unity of Germany realized by Austria were singularly mistaken about the nature of that Power. The Habsburgs, for reasons that are not quite clear, have never been able to unite any of the nations that have come under their rule in a real union. They have always been able to make conglomerations or external accumulations of provinces. Their only device in assimilating or uniting the heterogeneous people of their empire has always been to ally themselves with the Catholic Church, and so secure a certain kind of unity. However, it is quite clear that the Catholic Church, in spite of the admirable system of centralization and her great powers of bringing about uniformity of thought and sentiment, could not produce that political and internal or national unity which alone in modern times can give real power to a state. Austria, in other words, or rather the Habsburgs, have at all times been unsuccessful in their attempts at bringing about that political and national unity which in the latter half of the nineteenth century many a patriotic German hoped to see introduced into their own country at the hands of the Habsburgs. In order to understand this important point very clearly we must hark back for a moment to the times of a war which happened long before the period here treated, but the influence of which is clearly sensible to the present day. We mean the famous Silesian wars which, with the interruption of a few years (1748-1756) raged from 1740 to 1763. In 1741, Frederick the Great succeeded by one victory, obtained

by his generals at Mollwitz, in 1741, in wresting from Maria-Theresa, the ruler of Austria-Hungary, the large and fertile province of Silesia. All the campaigns that followed, with their numerous battles until the peace of 1763, may from the standpoint of our present considerations be quite omitted. They were excessively numerous, and some of them very famous, yet they were unable to alter in any way whatever the effect of the battle of Mollwitz, and they may therefore for our present purpose be left out of consideration altogether. By the conquest of Silesia Frederick the Great acquired a German-speaking province, and was enabled to round off the territory of Prussia both territorially and nationally. At that time Prussia had very few, if any, inhabitants who were not German-speaking, and the German-speaking people formed the all but totality of Prussia, whose nationality was therefore practically unbroken. On the other hand, the loss of Silesia to Maria-Theresa affected the whole subsequent history of Austria. For in 1740, before Frederick wrested Silesia from Maria-Theresa, the majority of the inhabitants in the Austrian Empire were Germans. Austria at that time possessed neither Galicia nor Bukovina, neither Bosnia nor Venetian Italy. The Germans were still in numerical preponderance in Austria. By the loss of Silesia this preponderance of the German element in Austria was done away with. Maria-Theresa, in order to make up for her territorial losses, was compelled to seek for compensation eastward, that is, in parts of Europe where there was no German element. By her conquests in 1772 and 1775 (Galicia and Bukovina), in 1797, the Treaty of Campo Formio (Venetian Italy), etc., etc.,

Austria acquired provinces indeed, but always territories inhabited by peoples of an entirely divergent nationality. Thus it may be seen that the Silesian wars threw into the heart of Austria the seeds of perennial disunion, and rendered Austria to the present day incapable of uniting her people into a political fabric of homogeneity. Frederick the Great indeed deprived Austria not only of a province, but in a sense of all her provinces, because Austria could never really assimilate those provinces, having once lost, as she did the preponderance of her German subjects and being unable to restore it. Prussia, which obtained the heterogeneous elements of the three portions of Poland in 1772, 1793 and 1795, was yet so rich in her German provinces, especially after the Congress of Vienna in 1815, when she obtained large provinces on the Rhine, that her national unity, although broken into in her eastern possessions, was infinitely superior to that of Austria.

From the preceding considerations it is evident that Prussia was in 1850 in a position of far greater advantage for the national work of the unity of Germany than Austria could possibly be. For Prussia itself occupied a very considerable part of Germany proper, it had German people as subjects, a perfect unity of language and also largely of religion, and all that she lacked was some one great statesman who by genius and luck might realize the old hope. In Austria, on the other hand, the greatest of all statesmen could not have entertained a hope of realizing outside Austria, that is in Germany, what a succession of rulers and statesmen in the preceding three centuries had never been able to realize in Austria proper. The ethnography of Austria was against any statesman who would have

tried to realize the unity of Germany. The ethnography of Germany was quite in favour of Prussia. Prussia indeed wanted great men; Austria could not have done much even with the greatest men at the helm. In the light of events in our own times we can see with dazzling clearness that any hope of seeing the unity of Germany realized by Austria was doomed to failure. Austria had neither a powerfully organized and united army, nor a regular and well-stocked exchequer. She had no national forces either in literature, science, art, or any other intellectual or spiritual department. Without such aids even the greatest statesman is shorn of results. Prussia, on the other hand, through the reforms introduced by a number of non-Prussian statesmen, such as Stein, Hardenberg, Scharnhorst, Altenstein and others from 1807 onwards, had created a system of national education both in law and high-schools, by works both scientific and literary, and in her army as well as in her national revenue she had placed herself in a state of great efficiency. Here indeed a great statesman might, by a clever, timely and successful diplomacy achieve much.

The old question whether Athens made Themistocles or whether Themistocles made Athens, is to the mind of many a historian an unsolvable problem. However, by a coincidence no doubt very strange, yet regular, we find that in any case of a really great man in history the possibilities of his career had long been prepared by the state or the nation to which he belongs. So it is in our present case. It cannot be denied that the influence of Bismarck ever since he came to power and to the enjoyment of the complete confidence of King William of Prussia, was a decisive power in the

history of that country and of Germany. Yet it is equally certain that without the previous reforms made by such men as Luther, Melanchthon, Brenz, and the still greater literary and artistic lights of the Germans who gave them intellectual unity, let alone all the labours of those great reformers in Prussia who succeeded, by indefatigable and ill-requited work, in restoring Prussia to her former greatness, Bismarck's genius alone could not have done anything. Bismarck at Vienna would have been as helpless as was at the same place Schmerling, or Count Beust. Bismarck's genius is great, but to him too we may apply the great rule of history, "*Est locus in rebus*" (History is largely influenced by the locality where things happen).

From the Revolution in 1848 to the end of the fifties Prussia was still held to be subordinate to Austria in point of influence in Germany; and an attack on Austria was not considered in any way as promising sure success for the Prussian army. At the same time the Prussian army had ever since the great defeat of Jena in 1806 been reformed and improved and made an instrument of fight second to none in Europe, and, as subsequent events have proved it, superior to most. When Austria in 1859 had been defeated by France (as related above), and had been deprived of most of her territory in Italy; when at the same time the uncompromising position of the Hungarians to Austria rendered the interior security of Austria more than problematic; a new view of the relation of the Danubian monarchy to Prussia was taken by several Prussian statesmen. Of those men of action, Bismarck was even at that time the most important. He came from a small family in North Germany, and had to recom-

mend him neither wealth nor very remarkable personal connections. His strongest recommendation was his extraordinary political genius. Now that we have been for some time in possession of his letters, his speeches, and may with fair prospect of success cast a constructive glance over the whole life of the great statesman, we may perhaps be entitled to formulate his peculiar genius in a few concise words.

Undoubtedly Bismarck was a remarkable personality, and sheer personality has always proved a power in history; but in addition to the unanalyzable qualities and charms of a strong personality, aided by an imposing stature, force and expressiveness of feature, we must always underline the fact that Bismarck was endowed with particularly great technical gifts for the conduct of great political affairs. In the first place, all his measures, diplomatic and other manœuvres, were based on an information regarding the persons and circumstances he was called upon to deal with, such as very few statesmen have ever disposed of. In addition to a perfect knowledge of Prussia, of the influential men and women of recent history, Bismarck joined a very rare insight into the general political state of affairs in Europe. He was perfect master of the French language, and had also an astounding command of English; nay, when later on he was Ambassador in Russia, he acquired a working knowledge of Russian. Of the courts and the political situation of the leading Powers in Europe he had acquired from personal study and from a judicious course of reading such ample and accurate knowledge, that as a rule he was better informed about the tendencies and character of political events than most men dealing with them directly or

indirectly. Through all his life we are struck with that solidity of information. As is only natural, from a basis so solid and well knit, the vigorous mind of Bismarck could not but infer sound and lasting conclusions. Accordingly he was seldom mistaken in the strategy of his actions; although at all periods of his life the wisdom of his methods was challenged, doubted, attacked and even ridiculed by men in important and commanding positions. In fact, while we cannot but repeat the above remark that Bismarck's triumph was only the concluding scene of the various antecedent historical events preparing the unity of Germany; yet we should fly in the face of historical truth if we did not recognize that without Bismarck's energy and wisdom the last part of the long history of German unity could have been enacted only very much later than 1871. Bismarck certainly precipitated a political work undoubtedly inevitable, yet still dependent on a concourse of circumstances which only a superior statesman was able to focus and utilize.

In our own times, when the passions roused by the greatest events in German history have not yet subsided, we are treated every year to another work by a German professor, tracing the origin of modern Germany either to the Emperor William I. alone, or to the anonymous yet "exceedingly important" influence of this or that minor German sovereign; or, on the other hand, to Bismarck alone and exclusively. The former opinion defended by Professor Otto Lorenz, the latter by innumerable German writers, are, we take it, both untenable. Like all great historical facts, the unity of Germany was for generations prepared by general and vast causes embracing an infinite number

of particular phenomena; but was terminated by the strong hand of one man. It is certain that that one man was not Emperor William I. It is equally certain that that man was Bismarck.

It will be found on intimate study of the times of Bismarck that he had firmly seized the necessity of bringing about the unity of Germany under Prussian ascendency by the most careful conduct of Prussia's foreign policy. He knew that the consummation of the great work could not be done by the introduction or academical spread of mere ideas. He knew it was pre-eminently a matter of diplomacy and war. He clearly pointed out in letters and speeches, that while some nations may bring about their national unity through treaties, or the slow work of mutual assimilation, the Germans, he rightly held, could not possibly realize their secular hope without establishing themselves as a great military power. This is the sense of his famous utterance that history is made by blood and iron. Nobody admired Cavour, the unifier of Italy, more than did Bismarck; likewise nobody acknowledged the surpassing merit of Francis Deák in bringing about the unity of Hungary in a peaceful way more than did Bismarck; but nobody also saw more clearly that the problems with which Deák or Cavour had to contend, although identical in their objects with that of Bismarck, yet had a character so different that for their realization other means were required. It is this clear insight into the real needs for the establishment of German unity that constitutes the greatness of Bismarck. It is true, his complete success has shed an unusual lustre upon his name and his policy. However, it is not the success of Bismarck that ought to prompt

us to recognize him as one of the greatest statesmen. It is, as we shall see, both the wisdom and the moderation of his politics. As diplomatic reverses at home or abroad could never discourage him, even so the greatest triumphs in the field or in diplomatic negotiations were never able to beguile him into excessive actions. We must admire both his courage and his moderation, and it is probably the latter quality which will make his name for ever that of a model statesman. His adversaries were very numerous. It is well known that the Empress Frederick III., the daughter of Queen Victoria, was the persistent and implacable enemy of Bismarck. On the other hand, the historian Mommsen was likewise continually hostile to Bismarck; and it is certain that the great man lived in a world of incessant intrigues directed against his person and against his work. His greatest successes were unable to persuade the Empress Frederick that she was in error, and all his enemies and opponents were conspiring to shake the nerve of the Titan. In vain. In addition to physical resources of the rarest strength, Bismarck, like all great men, had also an unusual amount of good luck. Like Richelieu and Mazarin, the two greatest ministers of France, Bismarck could, under all circumstances, count on the unswerving attachment and friendship of his sovereign. Against this powerful friendship and steadfast confidence of the monarch all the shafts of envy and jealousy were hurled in vain. Not that the Emperor always shared the opinions or the desires of Bismarck; in fact he was both in 1864, in 1866 and in 1870 very reluctant to accept the policy of his great minister. However reluctant, he in the end consented to it, and

it is only fair to say that without that constant and unfailing support and countenance on the part of his monarch, Bismarck could not possibly have resisted the unceasing cabal undermining his position.

In English-speaking countries, let alone in France, the prevalent idea of Bismarck is that of a harsh man, inaccessible to any human sentiment, and obeying only the dictates of political egoism. There is, however, very much exaggeration in that picture. Bismarck was neither harsh nor cruel. He certainly was imperious and was conscious of the necessity of severe measures; but both in private life, whether in his relations to his family or to the few personal friends he had (amongst whom was the American historian Motley), or in public life, his was chiefly the character of a man who acted on objective and not on subjective motives. All over Bismarck is written the great German term, *Sachpolitik*; that is, a policy of real and objective State interests, without regard to personal likes or dislikes. In his personal character there certainly were two redeeming features. In the first place he was a man of profound and serene humour. To the modern mind even Richelieu and Mazarin lack this relieving feature, and appear therefore somewhat stiff. Bismarck had a remarkable share of that North German humour which is certainly more grim than agreeable, but which no doubt helps us to put some of the uncouth things of this world into better proportion. It is certainly worthy of the finest humour when Bismarck, at the height of the all-decisive battle of Sadowa (Koeniggraetz), anxious to know the opinion of Moltke, the General-in-Chief, about the probable issue of the engagement, approached the old and very

reticent general, not with anxious questions, but by offering him his cigar-box and watching Moltke's way in selecting the best of the cigars. When Moltke carefully examined the cigars and actually found out the best of them, Bismarck knew that the battle was going on satisfactorily for Prussia, and smilingly withdrew from the presence of Moltke.

The other and even more satisfactory feature in Bismarck was his utter frankness. In him there was no cant and no hypocrisy. He never said he was righteous when he was only political, and it is he who had the sincerity of saying, "We Prussians make no moral conquests," which in plain English means that Prussians are selfish, interested and ruthless fighters. This frankness very frequently puzzled and quite misled his diplomatic opponents. They were unable to believe in it, and so invariably searched for other motives behind that apparent frankness. As a matter of fact Bismarck was quite frank, and he had absolutely broken with the former habit of dissimulation and reticence considered to be the two chief artifices of diplomacy. It is natural that such frankness is repulsive to people who are habitually self-conscious and not frank. On the other hand it is equally certain that the greatness of Bismarck is increased and not lowered by that noble and virile quality which most men are neither allowed nor able to practise in their own lives.

We have so far seen that Bismarck's successes are based on sound information of all the elements and factors necessary for his success, and on a personality most powerful, sincere, and aided by the constant friendship of his monarch. We may now see the

details of his three great triumphs; we mean the war with Denmark in 1864; the war with Austria in 1866; and the war with France in 1870-71.

The Danish war we call a triumph, although from the military standpoint it was not only not a glory for Prussia, who acted against tiny Denmark with the aid of Austria, and so could have, even in case of great victories, scarcely claimed any particular glory for it; nay, it is well known that the Prussian army did then, in 1864, not manifest any of that superiority which made her so famous in the other two wars. We call the Danish war a triumph of Bismarck's, because it was the deeply thought-out manœuvre of how to embroil and compromise Austria, and so bring about the second war.

Briefly, the facts are these. The Southern provinces of Denmark are called Schleswig-Holstein; they were then, as they are now, mostly inhabited by German-speaking people, and they commanded especially the harbour of Kiel, which was essential for Prussia in order to have the command of the Baltic and the North Sea, by making (as they have since done) a canal between Kiel and the mouth of the Elbe river. At that time Austria and Prussia were still both members of the German Confederacy, and it was certain that Austria would not allow Prussia to possess herself of the two duchies, Schleswig-Holstein, single-handed. The Germans, bullies with regard to small people, as are all great powers, heeded not the constant and just recriminations of Denmark, that had given no umbrage or cause for a war to any German sovereign, let alone to the German Confederation.

It was Bismarck's aim to embroil Austria in a ques-

tion of no possible interest to Austria, and thereby to win diplomatic leverage over her. It was likewise his object to feel his way in the great international question whether Europe would or would not interfere with the plans of Germany. Although most of the statesmen in Prussia seriously objected to Bismarck's Danish policy, apprehending, as they did, the immediate interference of England (the Princess of Wales being a daughter of the King of Denmark), yet Bismarck was right in assuming that neither England nor Russia would interfere, and that the only upshot of the whole enterprise would be to engage Austria in what for her was a sterile and embarrassing undertaking.

In this he completely succeeded. The Danes were of course in the end forced to submit, and Austria and Prussia administered the two duchies in common. Bismarck rightly calculated that such common administration of a province, useful only to neighbouring Prussia, could not but lead to friction, and thus give him a new handle for complications with Austria. And when matters did not proceed rapidly enough, Bismarck forced a treaty upon Austria, the treaty of Gastein, August 14th, 1865, in which he apparently put an end to possible friction in the administration of the two duchies, by giving Austria and Prussia two distinct territories for administration; yet in reality the treaty of Gastein was, by its very nature, certain to lead to still more serious complications. Austria, as Bismarck expected her to be, found herself wronged, and the war of 1866 became only a matter of a few incidents which Bismarck did not hesitate to provoke. At that time Bismarck was struggling both with the numerous

adversaries at the Court of Berlin, and with the unyielding Parliament of Prussia, the members of which, in utter ignorance of the necessities of the case, refused Bismarck supplies for the army, and so forced him to find the means of keeping up the army and increasing it by autocratic ordinances of the King, countersigned by him. He then (1863-65) was the most unpopular man in Prussia. However, he persisted, because he clearly saw that the war with Austria was inevitable, and that by such a war alone the destiny of Germany and the ascendency of Prussia could possibly be realized.

As already stated, King William, as he then was, was very much opposed to the war with Austria, and it was only with great difficulty that Bismarck could persuade him to enter upon it. Moltke, on the other hand, was quite confident of defeating the Austrian army. In fact, the defeat of the Austrian army was for every expert a foregone conclusion. In addition to the constant sin of all Austrian armies, that is, to their diversity of languages and races, and the consequent lack of unity so fatal to all armies, the Austrian army then was still armed with old-patterned rifles—with muzzle-loaders, whereas the Prussians had breech-loaders, so that the Prussian infantry was able to shoot six times more quickly than did the Austrians.

It is to the ordinary contemplator of the manners and actions of governments one of the greatest riddles how bureaucratic governments will, even in the face of the greatest dangers, scarcely move to introduce reforms. The fact that the Prussian army was provided with much superior arms had long been known by Austria and by everybody; yet no attempt was

made to improve the Austrian rifle. In addition to this, another characteristic feature of Austrian military organization was practised: the old Austrian mistake of placing the wrong man in the right place, and the right man in the wrong place. Bismarck had, as we have seen in a former chapter, long promised Italy to help her in her attempts at unity, and accordingly he had early in 1866 concluded a treaty with the Italian Government, in keeping with which Italy was bound to attack Austria in Lombardy at the same time that Prussia would attack Austria in Bohemia. At that time the Austrian general Benedek had from long experience a very complete knowledge of Lombardy, and was no doubt able to conduct a successful campaign against Italy. Archduke Albert, on the other hand, the Austrian Emperor's uncle, had a very authoritative and useful knowledge of Bohemia, and would have no doubt played a creditable *rôle* in a Bohemian campaign against Prussia. In that war, therefore, Benedek should have obtained the chief command in Lombardy, which he knew very well, and Archduke Albert the chief command in Bohemia, with which he was so intimately acquainted. However, Austrian wisdom, as usual, intrusted Benedek with the command in Bohemia, of which he knew nothing, and sent Albert to Italy, where his presence against the small and untrained army of Italy was scarcely required.

The military consequences of that blunder became manifest at once. Benedek, attacked in the north-east of Bohemia by the converging troops of Prussia under Moltke and the Crown Prince, lost his head at once, and by a series of strategic mistakes lost a number of minor engagements, and finally, in the great battle

of Sadowa or Koeniggraetz on July 3rd, 1866, was forced to beat a hasty retreat. The Prussians at once followed him and occupied Moravia and marched close to Vienna. It was then that Bismarck's greatness and real statesmanship were shining in the most brilliant manner. The Prussian army and all its generals, together with the Prussian king, were intoxicated with their rapid victories, and in their enthusiasm naturally insisted with violence on entering Vienna. However Bismarck, whose eyes were already directed towards France, and who wanted to complete the great scheme of the German nation, clearly felt that he would soon need the friendship and alliance of Austria, and that he could obtain neither by a gratuitous humiliation of the Austrian ruler, such as an entrance into Vienna would unfailingly entail upon the latter. He therefore clearly and unmistakably declared to his sovereign that it was in the greatest interest of Prussia to discontinue her victorious progress, and to make peace with Austria on a basis not humiliating to the conquered. Another Prussian army had meanwhile made a most victorious advance into Hanover and the South German States, who had joined Austria and were trying to fight Prussia. On the other hand, however, the Austrians had been very successful against the Italians, both on sea and on land, and Italy was practically at the mercy of Austria. Finally, Bismarck was afraid, as he himself said later on, that Napoleon III., Emperor of France, in order to put an end to the rapid victories of Prussia, might attack the Rhenish provinces and thereby render Sadowa and other successful battles of the war barren and unprofitable.

When Bismarck saw that no ordinary means would suffice to persuade the generals and the Prussian King to adopt his view of the situation, he threatened to take his life rather than consent to an entry in Vienna and the humiliation of the Austrian ruler. As usual he prevailed, and the Peace of Prague was made (1866), by which Austria lost no territory whatever, and had to pay a mere nominal sum by way of compensation, but by which Austria consented to be no longer a member of the German Confederation. In consequence of that, Prussia, that had meanwhile incorporated Hanover and other territories, especially Frankfort-on-the-Main, had become the leading Power in Germany, and Bismarck now established the North German Confederacy, which was a partial realization of the great hope of the German nation. Italy, as we have seen, now obtained even the Venetian territory hitherto held by Austria, and so the campaign of 1866 established the ascendency of Prussia in Germany, completed the unity of Italy, and to the present day placed Austria on the level of a minor Power.

# XII

## THE FRANCO-GERMAN WAR

THE victories of the Prussians in 1866; the ascendency of Prussia in Germany since the day of Sadowa, were events the importance of which was clear to many a statesman and diplomatist in Europe. Thiers, Edgar Quinet, and other leading politicians and public men of France, clearly pointed out that Bismarck could not possibly rest on the laurels of his Austrian campaign; that he was necessarily striving to complete the unity of Germany which in 1867 was yet far from being completed. Bismarck in 1866 had united the Northern states of Germany into the North-German Confederacy; but the Southern states—Bavaria, Würtemberg and Baden were not yet combined with Prussia. It is a question quite accessible to historical discussion whether Bismarck could not already in 1866 have brought about the unity of the Northern with the Southern states of Germany. In fact, many a modern historian has reproached Bismarck, with great show of justice, with a deliberate plan of retarding the unity of all Germany between 1866 to 1870. Bismarck, it is said, whose military success over Bavaria in 1866 had been as complete as his success over Austria, Bismarck might have very well forced Bavaria

and other Southern states of Germany to join the North-German Confederacy. In that way the Franco-German war might have easily been avoided, and the unity of Germany secured in a peaceful manner, without the terrible loss in men and money entailed by the gigantic war in 1870 and 1871.

It cannot be denied that in the preceding arguments there are some elements of truth; and Bavaria, although at all times highly differentiated from the rest of Germany, and more especially from Prussia, might have been persuaded to join the North-German Confederacy without the terrible war against France. On the other hand, Bismarck's considerations were of a deeper, and, on the whole, of a juster nature. He felt that the South German states could not be permanently held as members of a united Germany, unless a great and successful war would put an end to any attempt at local separation, and to the numerous centrifugal tendencies of the Catholic Church and Catholic sovereign families in the south of Germany. Moreover, it is well known that those Southern states in 1867 as well as in 1740 or 1645, were always coquetting with France, and had, by secular tradition and habit, a policy of friendship, nay, of alliance, with the French. These old historical traditions and tendencies, Bismarck rightly felt, could not be efficiently combated by anything short of a successful war against France, in which the Bavarians too would be obliged to undergo the sufferings, and to accept the sacrifices necessary to the completion of the great plan. Bismarck, therefore, made no definite attempt at persuading Bavaria, Würtemberg and Baden from 1866 to 1870 to join the North-German confederates.

In France, the fates of the nation were partly in the hands of Napoleon III., partly in that of an obstreporous, hysterical and aimless opposition. Napoleon III., at no time a great statesman, was then moreover enfeebled, and rendered practically useless by his physical inability—he suffered from stone disease—and his plans were easily overridden by those of his wife Eugénie. The Empress was one of the most beautiful women in Europe. In body endowed with the most astounding vigour and health, she was in mind a narrow, resourceless, and badly advised woman, whose only plan was to secure the inheritance for her son Louis (Lou-Lou). She was intimately connected with the Catholic Church, with the French clergy, and prevailed upon Napoleon to extend to the Pope considerations and regards that from a political standpoint were most injurious to France; and, like so many other female sovereigns of France, she had a genius for ignoring the right man; and for encouraging the wrong minister. For even at that time there was no lack of information about the coming danger. Colonel Stoffel, who was the military attaché in Berlin, never ceased informing the Emperor (whom he had aided in writing the life of Cæsar) about the superior organization of the Prussian army. In fact, Stoffel had the clearest impression of the hopeless inferiority of the French army as against the then army of Prussia. When the disaster deprived Napoleon of his throne, several of the most incisive reports of Stoffel to the Emperor on the Prussian army were found—unopened—in the bureau of the Emperor. In Parliament also, Adolphe Thiers repeatedly implored the Deputies to abstain from any hostility to Germany, and although Thiers'

imprecations may have been somewhat interested, in that he did not want to increase the power of the opposition in Parliament by encouraging their anti-Prussian policy, yet in the fervent and very statesman-like speeches of Thiers, directed against the anti-Prussian politics of the French Parliament, there was a large element of honesty and truth. Everybody felt that Napoleon's mistake in 1866 of having abstained from an attack on Prussia immediately after Sadowa, had caused an irreparable loss of prestige to France, and more particularly to the Napoleonic dynasty. The opposition in the French Parliament constantly attacking Napoleon, and forcing him in the end to very broad and considerable concessions, positively refused to help him in the reconstruction of the army; and there is now, in the light of the latest memoirs of that time, little doubt that the opposition is more directly responsible for the terrible military disasters of France in 1870 and 1871 than even Napoleon himself. By refusing to give any supply for the military force, the necessity of which Napoleon, Marshal Niel, and several other leading military officials had clearly seen and pressed upon the nation, the French Parliament increased the inferiority of France and so raised the boldness of Prussia, which, as we know, was most minutely informed about every public or secret move of the French Government and the French military authorities.

In spite of the lack of any military reform Napoleon, or rather Eugénie, became more and more convinced that a war with Prussia was absolutely indispensable in order to recoup the prestige of the Emperor's reign, and the hopes of his son. Accord-

ingly, a pretext was easily found, and that pretext was the well-known Hohenzollern question. One of the princes of the house of Hohenzollern, that is, the Prussian dynasty, was proposed as candidate for the Spanish throne, and Bismarck in the beginning acted as if he encouraged that candidature. The French Government affected to see in that move an attempt "to restore the Empire of Charles V." The very exaggeration lying in these words clearly shows that Napoleon and Eugénie were only trying to find a pretext to make war on Prussia. Nothing could be more ridiculous than to see in the candidature of a Hohenzollern prince for the throne of Spain, a serious attempt at restoring a universal Empire. The French Government, however, affected to be greatly agitated by that candidature, and finally Benedetti, the French ambassador at Berlin, was dispatched to interview King William of Prussia himself. King William readily admitted that the candidature of the Hohenzollern prince ought to, and was to be dropped. Under ordinary circumstances, the incident would have ended there. However, Grammont, the French foreign minister, determined to bring about a rupture with Prussia. Convinced as he was that the Southern States of Germany would join France against Prussia; confiding as he did in the absurd statement of Émile Ollivier, that the French army was completely ready "to the last button"; confiding likewise in the conditional promise of Austria to join France and in a similar, if vague, promise on the part of Italy; Grammont, we say, wanted to exercise pressure upon King William through Benedetti to the effect, that not only should King William undertake to discount-

enance a Hohenzollern candidature, but also that the King should give a formal promise never to entertain such a candidature in future. King William declined to give such a promise. The form in which he did that, was neither offensive to France nor derogatory to his own honour. The interview between the King and Benedetti was at Ems, a watering-place on the Rhine. Bismarck, Moltke and Roon, who had been anxiously watching the manœuvres of Grammont, and were hoping for an immediate rupture of relations and outbreak of the war, on receiving the answer of King William given to Benedetti, learnt to their dismay that the answer was so worded as to avoid any great affront. At this critical moment Bismarck, by omitting certain words of the King's reply, and by abbreviating it in an artful manner, gave it the appearance of a most offensive declaration to France; and by this Machiavellian manœuvre, Bismarck secured what he and his two colleagues had been waiting for, that is, an instantaneous declaration of war on the part of France; for no sooner had the garbled reply reached Paris, than both Parliament and the Parisian people became frantic with indignation, and under the cries "*à Berlin! à Berlin!*" forced upon the Government a declaration of war.

This action of Bismarck, some twenty years later related by himself to an Austrian journalist, has been frequently held up as a specimen of his most ruthless and unrighteous policy. No doubt in giving the King's reply a version calculated to outrage French dignity, Bismarck acted upon purely political, that is to say, unsentimental principles. On the other hand the provocation really had come from France; the

war was inevitable; and both Bismarck and Moltke knew that the French army was then, and just then, in a state of inferiority and unpreparedness, promising well for a rapid and complete victory of the Prussians. To neglect such a conjuncture of circumstances, rightly seemed to Bismarck a thing against patriotism; and from a strictly historical, that is, practical standpoint, one cannot but approve a diplomatic move that has secured for Germany complete peace and prosperity for now over thirty-four years; and at the same time put the balance of Europe on a safer and steadier basis.

Bismarck, who, as we have seen, used all his moderation in the moment of his wonderful triumph over Austria, now used all the energy and dash he was capable of to precipitate a terrible conflict with France. In both cases he was guided by the soundest and coolest considerations of policy. In both cases he was right. The question of war or peace is one that most people are unable really to discuss; for nothing short of a very complete or comprehensive knowledge of war gives us the means of placing the great question in its right perspective. Such a knowledge of war is of very rare occurrence. They who constantly preach peace and condemn men like Bismarck have not learnt the great lesson of war, that war in the right time with the right means saves many a nation sacrifices very much greater than those entailed by the war. One has only to compare the policy of Bismarck with that of Austria in 1870 in order not only to approve of Bismarck's so-called Machiavellian manœuvre, but to consider his whole policy as one eminently meant to secure the true benefits of peace. It is on the cards that Austria in 1870 ought to have

joined France unconditionally. It is evident that Austria ought to have learnt, if not from the bygone events of her own history in the eighteenth century, at any rate from the palpable mistake of Napoleon in 1866, that it was her duty to attack Germany in the East as soon as Germany invaded France in the West; just as Napoleon in 1866 ought to have invaded Prussia in the West when Bismarck attacked Austria in the East. Instead of that, Austria—ever unready—abstained from joining in the colossal conflict. The Emperor Francis Joseph neglected what was then his chief duty—that is, to become a strong and faithful ally of the French; to reduce the possible victories of Prussia; to recoup his position and to raise Austria to the international position that she occupied in the eighteenth century, when Maria Theresa, in a spirit of infinitely greater statesmanship, never missed an opportunity of interfering in the great international affairs of Europe. The peaceful policy of the Emperor Francis Joseph in 1870 has, as we now know, been the death-blow of Austro-Hungary in her position as an international Power. Austria, that has at all times lived more by pressure from abroad than thanks to cohesion from the inside; Austria now, from 1870 onwards, when she exercised no pressure upon, nor received any from abroad, necessarily drifted into interior anarchy, and has ever since been the prey of the most unruly, aimless, and hopeless party struggles.

The peaceful policy of Austria in 1870 has entailed upon her the greatest losses, economic, moral and political; losses infinitely greater than any loss she could have sustained in 1870 by joining the French against Prussia.

The war between Prussia and France at once manifested the inner unity of the German nations; for the Southern States in Germany—Bavaria, Würtemberg and Baden—at once joined Prussia and the Northern States, and under the leadership of Moltke, of the Crown Prince Frederick, and of Prince Frederick Charles, the German armies invaded France, and in nearly every single battle worsted the French; even when, as at Gravelotte, the Germans had not the superiority of numbers. It is needless to dwell here on the details of the war, the various tragic scenes of which are still within the memory of everyone. It is well known how absolutely unprepared the French were; it is equally well known that while each individual German officer was full of the most independent and daring initiative, the French officers and generals, from Bazaine and Marshal MacMahon downwards, lost all initiative and every particle of that famous French resourcefulness which in 1859 had carried Napoleon's army victoriously through the Italian campaign, although the French army, then as in 1870, was very sadly unprepared and ill-provided for.

The most incapable of the French generals was Bazaine, the commander of Metz. At the first blush it appears inexplicable why the German generals, none of whom had seen or experienced a great war, except the war of 1866, which lasted only a few weeks, should prove so immeasurably superior to the French generals, every one of whom had gone through numerous campaigns previous to 1870. In fact, it must be said that in 1870 theory proved infinitely superior to practice; and the German officers, mere theorists, so to speak, undid all the plans, practice and routine of

the French generals. The explanation of this remarkable puzzle may be found in the fact that the experience of the French generals was great indeed, but it had been acquired, not in Europe and against European armies so much as in Mexico, in Algiers, in China; that is, against nations of a civilization and science inferior to that of Europe. We have only lately seen that a war with an ever so small European nation is an affair of a totally different character from wars against black, yellow or mixed races. The Germans were prepared for that war, and for over two generations had studied all its possibilities in the minutest detail. After the terrible disaster of Sedan and Metz came the siege of Paris. The French, maddened by their unprecedented disasters, accepted for a time the guidance of Gambetta, a man of energy and insight, but one who lacked the more ruthless virtues of an efficient dictator. He was able to create new armies, to offer to the Germans a resistance on the Loire and in the north of France which in many ways was more efficient than that offered to the French by the old regular army of France. The Germans were, after October, 1870, unable to repeat those wholesale captures of armies which characterizes the first stage of their war with France; yet Gambetta, it must now be said with regret, was not quite a match for the entirely different situation created in France through the German victories. Not a Gambetta, a Danton was needed. Gambetta, who rightly pursued the policy of resistance *à outrance*, ought to have done away with all the elements of possible opposition to his right plans.

We now know from German military writers that the Germans could not have continued the war for

another two or three months, after January, 1871. The winter was terribly cold; Bismarck, as he tells us himself in his memoirs, spent sleepless nights in apprehensions of international interference; the financial resources of Germany began to be exhausted, and a popular and implacable war, in the manner of the Spanish resistance to Napoleon, would have forced the German army to retreat, and may have possibly deprived them of Lorraine if not of Alsace, too. However, in the French nation, as usual, there were strong parties filled by nothing but personal ambition, who, in the collapse of the old *régime*, welcomed an opportunity for raising themselves into power. Of these parties Adolphe Thiers was the head. He wanted peace, and peace by all means, for he knew that peace meant his own coming to power. He had been unsuccessful in his long and wearisome travels to the various courts of Europe asking for help and intervention. Bismarck —and that is his greatest diplomatic feat—had so completely isolated France that neither England nor Russia, let alone Austria, seriously thought of intervening; although, as we have seen, such intervention was in the vital interest of Austria, and, as we now see, would have been no mistake on the part of England. Surely it would have paid England to retard somewhat by intervention, the precocious growth of German ascendency. However, Bismarck was quite successful, and peace on terms proposed by Thiers was impossible. Peace was Thiers' great stepping-stone to power: that alone explains why Gambetta ought to have dispatched Thiers in one way or another, so as to carry out Gambetta's own plan of resistance *à outrance*. Gambetta, however, lacked the

power and deep if cruel insight of Danton; and, after the occupation of Paris, France was obliged to accept, in 1871, the terms of peace dictated by Bismarck at Frankfort on the Main, and by the terms of which France lost Alsace altogether, and of Lorraine, the portion inhabited by German-speaking people; and, moreover, was obliged to pay an indemnity of £200,000,000 sterling (1,000,000,000 dollars). The real cost of the war to France was 5,000,000,000 dollars, and but for the immense wealth of the country the war would have ruined it financially as it did politically.

There can be no doubt that the terrible military disasters inflicted on France by the Germans have done to that old and historic country of Europe an incalculable harm; harm, it must be admitted, incomparably more severe than any losses that a continuance of the war after February, 1871, could have possibly brought upon France. On the other hand, the Germans at Versailles—that is, in the very palace of Louis XIV., who in the seventeenth century had so deeply humiliated the Prussian Elector and the Germans generally—constituted themselves into the German Empire. King William of Prussia accepted the new dignity rather reluctantly; and there were great difficulties about the title, which was finally settled as King William, German Emperor. Thus the great political concepts of Bismarck, to bring about the unity of Germany by a successful war with France, rather than by negotiations and treaties with and between German sovereigns themselves, was completely realized; and Germany, that had hitherto been a lax and inefficient conglomeration of small and big sovereignties, was now launched on a great career of

political and commercial prosperity, and is now attempting to become a world-power.

The fate of Napoleon is well known. Like his uncle, the great Napoleon, he repaired to England and died in exile. The great Napoleon wanted to accomplish too much and failed; Napoleon III. wanted to accomplish too little and failed. The great Napoleon obeyed the dictates of his own vast mind; Napoleon III. obeyed the dictates of an ambitious and intellectually inferior woman. France herself was in a deperate position. The indemnity she was able to pay off very soon; but the terrible reaction from her dreams of glory, from her conceit, from her irregular ambition and disorganized home policy, was the most appalling that has ever come over any modern nation. She had lost all prestige in the eyes of her contemporaries; from having been the leading nation in Europe she sank down to a second-rate and third-rate Power. Yet people were mistaken in considering France lost and fallen for ever. Military defeats have as yet not really ruined a great nation. A nation worsted in fight may lose much, but she is sure to recover. It is the nation that does not fight, like Austria, that loses all the forces of possible recovery; because like nature, so mankind is made by constant fight, and a sentimental and effeminate desire for peace is the forerunner of a nation's complete extinction.

# EPILOGUE

FROM a consideration of the period we have just traversed, it is evident that in European history as well as in the history of the nations dependent on Europe or Europeans, a few but very incisive changes have altered the physiognomy of the political world. In the eighteenth century Europe consisted of a chaos of so-called *enclaves*; that is, no single monarchy or republic on the continent consisted of a continuous territory. The territory of each state was broken into and interrupted, as it were, by possessions belonging to another state; so that Prussia, for instance, had territory straggling over various latitudes east and west of the Elbe, all over North Germany. Austria had absolutely no territorial continuity. The great wars from 1740 to 1815 have very considerably simplified the map of Europe. At the present day the forty-six sovereign states of Europe have each of them a continuous, so to speak, self-contained territory. This fact is of the utmost importance in international policy. As long as the various states had territories rounded off in a most primitive fashion, or not at all, international wars were matters of necessity. The interests of Austria, for instance, were as great and as vital on the Escaut River in Belgium, as on the Po, or on the Middle Rhine. Any move on the part of the

French, the Dutch, the English, the Italian or German sovereigns that touched upon those territories, gave rise in Vienna to great anxieties and diplomatic counter-moves. At present this is no longer the case. Unless some very powerful motive comes into play, the several states of Europe have no proper reason to start international wars; and as a matter of history, there has been no international war in Europe since 1815. It is only owing to the complete neglect of history that we are still constantly being treated to predictions of international wars in Europe. There is, it must be admitted, one possibility for such an international war, and that is the alleged disruption of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, so readily predicted by well-informed journalists, after the death of the present Emperor-King. However, it may be submitted, that Austria, like France, has in the last one hundred and sixty years, been constantly declared to be on the verge of extinction. Austro-Hungary is no nearer her disruption now than she was in 1740. The Powers that keep Austria from within are somewhat weakened; on the other hand, the Powers that keep it from without are so great and so conscious of the need of Austria for the balance of politics in Europe, that Austria will in the worst case survive, owing to the same reasons to which Saxony or Bavaria have been enabled to weather all the storms of inner corruption or foreign attacks.

It may therefore be taken for granted that international wars in Europe have been rendered very unlikely, not to say impossible, by the gigantic fights of the eighteenth century up to 1815.

In addition to this, the most salient and important result of those much-maligned wars of the eighteenth

century, there is another, and in its way, almost equally important result which the eighteenth century was consciously and unconsciously fighting for, and which in the nineteenth century has come to be one of the factors of history—we mean the idea of nationalism. The nineteenth century is the age of the still higher national differentiation of Europe. Each of the numerous little and great nations of Europe, far from dropping their various languages, customs, mental attitudes, political ambitions, etc., have in the course of the nineteenth century more and more accentuated all their differences, so that in the south-east of Europe —in Hungary, Servia, Bulgaria, Roumania, Macedonia, Greece, as well as in the north, in Denmark, in Norway, in Sweden, and in other parts of Europe, we have now to deal with full-fledged political individualities, each of them based on a most determined idea of fighting for its own nationality. The process going on in Europe is, it may be seen, the very reverse of that which has been going on in America. In spite of the unprecedented immigration of Europeans to America during the nineteenth century, the American people show socially, economically, politically and mentally, the most astounding homogeneity. All over the United States there is one language and one description of mind, of manners, customs, views. In Europe, while the old lack of territorial uniformity has been remedied to a large extent, the lack of national unity has been going on increasingly, and we may now indeed say of Europe that it is a greater Hellas. As in the times of the ancient Greeks, small Greece or Sicily contained hundreds of autonomous, absolutely different, hostile, and mutually irreconcilable city-

states, so Europe is based on a wholesale diversity of interests, views, languages, laws and customs.

This immense difference between nation and nation in Europe, has produced in Europe a number of interesting and important literatures; it has stimulated into life ever new modes of thought; ever new arts and inventions; ever new forms of music; of amusement; in short, of every form of intellectual and emotional life. Considering these beneficial results, it is certainly not desirable that Europe should cease from cultivating its differences more than its affinities. Historically speaking, the rise of a United States of Europe is out of the question. Military efforts made for that purpose, either by Charles V. in the sixteenth century; by Louis XIV. in the seventeenth century; or by Napoleon in the nineteenth century, have all completely failed. On the other hand, the rise of such a United States of Europe from below, from the mutual assimilation of the nations, is evidently an impossibility.

Europe has proved a more difficult problem than either the philosophic thinkers or the great men of action of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries could foresee. Europe to-day is neither Russian nor Republican, as Napoleon is credited with predicting. Europe is neither entirely Protestant nor entirely Catholic. In Europe neither the Germanic nor the Latin races, let alone the Slav races, dominate politics. The absorption of Europe by the Slav races, so confidently predicted in the fifties and sixties of the nineteenth century, has not been realized in the least. The economic absorption of Europe at the hands of America, predicted with equal confidence by many

an American and European, will prove as fallible as was the prediction of the religious absorption of Europe by Protestantism; or the political absorption of Europe by the French. The Latin "races"—and in the first place, the French and the Italians—are to-day in a condition ready for some of the greatest problems of humanity. Amongst the Teutonic people the Germans are undoubtedly very powerful; on the other hand, the Austrian Germans are as decadent for the time being as are, amongst the Latin races, the Spanish.

It is high time that people studying history give up the untenable idea of "race." In Europe, at any rate, history is not made by "races"; but, in addition to the constant influences of geo-politics, by the mental vigour and the moral grit of nations. The Russians are crippled by their church—the Greek Orthodox Church—very much more than by their "racial" qualities; and the Italians, although of a different "race" from that of the Russians, are handicapped by the hostile influence of the Pope and the Catholic Church, infinitely more than by their "racial" deficiencies. Europe, like Hellas, is influenced to an incomparably higher degree by intellect and character, than by ethnographic or physiological qualities of the nations.

There is little doubt that on the foundations of public and private life, laid during the period which we have been studying, Europe will continue to rear another fabric of real civilization; which, if not essentially higher than that left us by the immortal efforts of the Greeks and the Romans, will at any rate permit a greater number of people to share in its benefits.

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